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ON CERTAIN METHODS OF THE RAMBLER  
AND THE  
HOME AND FOREIGN REVIEW.





ON CERTAIN METHODS OF THE RAMBLER  
AND THE HOME AND FOREIGN REVIEW.

A SECOND LETTER

TO THE

CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM.

BY

THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP ULLATHORNE.

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## ON CERTAIN METHODS OF THE RAMBLER AND THE HOME AND FOREIGN REVIEW.

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My Reverend Brethren,

In my former Letter on the Rambler and the Home and Foreign Review, I gave examples of the dangerous spirit in which the authors of those publications but too often handle questions bearing on religious truth or policy; yet prudence then restrained me, and charity induced me to forbear my hand, from making anything like a complete exposure of the methods by which those dangerous courses are pursued. The reserve which I then exercised, I can no longer justify in the same degree. When laymen stop their ears to the warnings of their prelates in what concerns Catholic teaching; when to the voice of those whom the Holy Ghost has appointed to rule that portion of the Church of which they are members, they only answer by repeating their unsound principles; when one of those laymen steps forth in person, not to correct his error, not to appeal to the higher and competent tribunal, but to evoke a judgment in his favour from that world at large which is as incapable of deciding questions which affect religious truth, as it is unauthorised; and when, not only in a formal publication, but in circling whispers that pass through Catholic society, grave charges of ignorance concerning that on which he wrote, not without solemn deliberation, are laid at the door of a Bishop;—then has the time come for speaking with a plainness such as no good Catholic will easily misunderstand.

The methods which have fascinated weaker minds, and disedified those that are stronger in faith and wisdom, when they come to be examined in the light of Catholic principles and by the rules of Catholic discretion, will no longer charm through mere force of style, confidence of tone, and mystery of expression. It is the very genius of those writings to impoverish truth, and to crush it beneath a showy display of what wears the appearance of literary and scientific wealth. Dangerous when not understood, where they are compre-

hended, those methods will be dangerous no more. I know how hard it is for those who have habitually sat as self-constituted judges of the systems and sentiments of their fellow men, and who have embraced within their criticism even the elements of the great Catholic system itself, to be brought themselves to the bar of judgment. It is in the very nature of such habits; it is a consequence of the practice of speaking as from the judgment-seat without the check of responsibility; it springs from the very reaction of the tone of authority assumed upon the tone of the mind itself, that critics should, as a common rule, be peculiarly sensitive to criticism. And were anything less concerned than the sacred cause of God and of souls, were it a mere question of dealing with human speculations and secular affairs, I should be among the last to interfere with their freedom.

I sharpen not my pen for controversy. The office of the physician is not to contend with the patient, but to examine his malady, and, where infection is threatened, to warn the household. The father goes not into the street to strive with the wayward members of the family, making the spectators attracted by curiosity his judges. Not only the Catholic doctrine, but also the methods of its exposition, are judged by authority, as they are taught from authority. And the pastoral staff is the symbol of the shepherd's duty, both in what concerns the leading of the flock to the good pastures, and in what regards their preservation from dangerous ways and hidden pitfalls. A doctrine has of recent years been insinuated among English Catholics which is fraught with danger to all ecclesiastical government, and it is to the effect that the one shepherd of the universal fold of Christ is the only shepherd; that the Bishops of the Church have but a provisional authority, and that, consequently, their ministerial acts and authoritative teachings may be slighted, if not even disregarded with impunity. Nay there are some persons who seem almost to flatter themselves on the notion, that it is meritorious towards the Holy See, to account the episcopal authorities which the Head of the Church has constituted as not entitled to any very marked spirit of submission. But whilst the main body of the faithful well understand what is the authority of a Bishop, and in what their duty towards that authority consists, those persons of whom I speak, seem incapable of comprehending that in trifling with the office and authority of Bishops, they trifle with some of the most sacred and fundamental of those principles which the Holy See inculcates and upholds. They seem to have forgotten,

that, whilst our Lord charged Peter with the care of His universal fold, and gave him the office of confirming his brethren, whether in what concerns faith or in what concerns discipline; He also said to the whole episcopate, in the person of the Apostles, "Teach all nations, and behold I am with you, even until the consummation of the world:"—and that even to the priesthood, represented in the seventy-two whom He sent before His face, our Lord said: "He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me. And he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me." The Son of God invested even the doctrine of the priest with a reverence to be due from the laity, the neglect of which He takes to His own account, and to the account of His Heavenly Father. As the Bishop judges the Priest, so does the Pope judge even the Bishop; but when a layman undertakes to exercise that judgment, he usurps the functions of the Holy See.

Guardian of its faith, a Bishop is the official examiner, as well as the ordinary judge, of the doctrines which are circulated under the protection of the Catholic name within his jurisdiction. And not only is he responsible for the soundness of the doctrines so circulated as to their substance, but for the prudence also of the methods after which they are put forth. For if, as St. Peter says, and all experience confirms, even the Scriptures inspired by God are liable to be wrested by unlearned and unstable men to their own destruction; how much more will this be the case with fallible writings; especially when those writings are enveloped in a language derived, in no remote degree, from rationalistic and even pantheistic philosophies, and requiring all the microscopic acuteness of theological insight to vindicate them from having narrowly escaped the gravest errors, even when that escape is successfully accomplished. Unless the admonitions and the censures which a Bishop passes upon such writings are reversed by the higher authority to which he is subject, they stand firm and bear authority within his diocese. Nor does the just and equitable exercise of this duty, which a Bishop exercises, require that the authors be first called upon for an explanation of their intentions; especially when their productions are anonymous, and already in circulation, when both clergy and laity proclaim the disedification they have caused, and when, despite of all remonstrance, those authors persevere in their course. The Church passes no judgment on what is latent in an author's mind; but only on what appears in the pages of his book, pages which are incapable of undergoing conversion, and on



the obvious sense which their language conveys to their readers. It is not the intention of the author, so much as the character and tendency of his book that is brought under revision; and those have the least reason for complaint who, without the same official obligation, judge or censure all the books that come before them without previously consulting their authors. When a small group of laymen persist in the face of ecclesiastical authority and of the murmurs of their disedified brethren, to apply the principles of rationalistic philosophy and of sceptical criticism to the habitual teaching of the Church, to the monuments of that teaching, and even to the Holy Scriptures, all good Catholics know what to think, and for what to pray.

In the constitution in which Benedict XIV. prescribes the rules to be followed in the examining and censoring of books, he says :—

“We know that some persons have complained that books are judged and condemned without their authors having the opportunity given them for making their defence. But we also know the answer that is given to this complaint, and it is to this effect; That there is no need of calling for the presence of authors where there is no intention of passing a personal censure or condemnation on them; and when the object in view is only to consult for the security of the faithful and to guard off the peril which so easily arises from the perusal of noxious books. Wherefore, we certainly do not in the least degree reprove those condemnations, on the ground that they are put in execution without the authors having been heard, especially, as it is to be presumed that what the author could allege in defence of himself and his teaching is not unknown or neglected by the censors and judges.”

Yet, following precedents, the illustrious Pontiff would make one exception, and it is in the case of any one who, being already an author distinguished by his merits and known to fame, shall have his book while yet in manuscript submitted for correction prior to its publication; in which case, the Pope considers it both equitable and desirable that the author himself be heard, and that, if he do not appear, some persons should at least be appointed from among the consultors to protect and defend his work.

Although I find nothing in the pamphlet which a chief contributor to the Review has put forth, that requires me to modify what I have already published; yet, before proceeding to the special subject of this Letter, I think it well to revert at some length to the Rambler's doctrines on original sin. I do this because I find that my previous animadversions

have awakened considerable attention, and that something more explicit is expected from me.

Heresy against what the Church has defined as of faith, is formally brought out in the conclusion which the author has drawn from the substance of his two essays, and has expressed in the following terms :

“Here, then, I come to the conclusion at which I arrived in my former letter, that original sin comes not by propagation, is nothing positive residing either in the soul or in the flesh, but is caused by the decree of the all-merciful God, who places us on a level, because we should infallibly break our necks on the heights. If sin is propagated, why do we only inherit Adam’s sin, not Noe’s, or that of our immediate parents?”\*

Not only is the propagation of original sin formally denied in this passage, but four arguments are adduced in defence of that negation.

First, it is argued that original sin “is nothing positive residing in the soul or the flesh.” And this is evidently put forth as an argument against the possibility of its transmission, I presume, on the principle that nothing can propagate nothing. In his former essay, the writer has expressed the same notion in the following words.

“For I repeat, there are no natural means of propagating moral evil: it has no substance, that it should have a material power of reproduction. *The law of the propagation of anything that can be called sin must be sought not in nature, but in the will of God, and in His attributes of love, mercy, purity, and justice.* The act by which He causes original sin to be inherited, cannot be the result of mere vengeance, or of justice untempered by mercy. We must rather seek its reason in the principle so much insisted on by St. Paul, that sin is not imputed where the law is not; that those who have not heard Christ’s words, nor seen His works, but are blind, have not sin. God, therefore, concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all. (Rom. v. 13; John xv. 22, 24., ix. 41; Rom. xi. 32.) He degraded man to a lower order, where the supernatural law bound him not, that he might not be liable to the extreme penalty of those who transgress it. When fences are removed, the sheep may stray and become wild, but they cannot be punished for leaping over the fold. *We are therefore born in sin by no natural law*, but because it is good for us: because the mercy of God will not set us on a high place, from which he knows we shall fall helplessly: because it is only kind to take away our power of gaining heaven, which, in fact, we should not gain, in order that we need not be abandoned to a supernatural punishment.”†

\* Rambler, May 1856, p. 340.

† Rambler, July 1855, p. 35-6.

The first argument, then, which is adduced against the propagation of original sin is, that being but a privation, a privation cannot be propagated; and it is expressly maintained that "the law of the propagation of anything that can be called sin must be sought *not in nature, but in the will of God.*" But this reasoning, while it shows the writer's opinion, is utterly unavailable as an argument, for defects are propagated as well as positive qualities; in other words, that which is positive and existent may come into the world with deficiencies. Thus, as the writer himself has remarked, the insane will propagate insane children, although insanity is a deficiency of mind. Arguing against the Manicheans, St. Augustine observes that "evil is privation of good, for example, wounds and death deprive the body of soundness and life, and the vices of the soul are privations of its natural good. In so far as they exist, all natures are good; but the good of which created nature is capable, may be augmented or diminished, and it is this diminution of good which is evil, but if nature be there still, some good must remain in order to constitute that nature; but the corruption of nature is evil, because, in so far as it is corruption, it is the privation of good. Corruption then cannot consume all the good without consuming all the nature. An evil man," concludes the Saint, "is an evil nature, because man is nature; but in so far as nature remains in him, he is good, and so we may say that an evil man is an evil good."\* In short, evil, though a privation, may be propagated, because the nature may be propagated in which the privation exists.

The second reason alleged for the non-propagation of original sin is that "it is caused by the decree of the all merciful God," and because "the law of the propagation of any thing that can be called sin must be sought.....in the will of God, and in his attributes of love, mercy, purity, and justice." But this is a frightful error, for it makes God the author of sin. It was to avoid ascribing sin to the infinite good God, that the Manicheans accepted the notion of an evil God; and it was in reply to that heresy that the negative character of evil and sin was first developed.

The third reason alleged for the non propagation of original sin is put in the shape of a question.—"If sin is propagated, why do we only inherit Adam's sin, not Noe's, or that of our immediate ancestors?" And the writer continues: "St. Augustine (Enchiridion, c. 47) finds no reason in the thing

\* St. Aug. Enchiridion, cap. 11-12.



itself; but ascribes it to the tempering moderation of God's mercy, lest those on whom the grace of regeneration is not conferred should in their eternal damnation be oppressed by too heavy a burden, if they were obliged by their origin to contract liability for the sins of all their ancestors since the creation."\* It is scarcely, however, fair to St. Augustine to have omitted remarking that he is arguing from sundry passages of Scripture on the probability that not only original sin, but the sins of the parents to the children unto the third and fourth generation are transmitted. Whatever be the value of it, he was elucidating this opinion. He argues that no proof exists in Scripture that bears on the transmission of any sin that intervenes between original sin and the sins of the third and fourth generation. In the course of his argument, the saint expressly says that "Regeneration through baptism is only instituted because generation is vitiated." However, the Rambler adds this further clause to his argument:—"Ultimately the whole system must be referred to God's mercy; for it is a mystery quite inexplicable on any principles of natural morality. But instead of bringing in God's mercy only when it is a question why we do not inherit the degradation of our immediate parents as well as that of Adam, I would bring it in from the first, and use it as the all-sufficient account of our being made to inherit Adam's degradation,—that fall which *inest unicuique proprium*, which each individual partakes, inasmuch as he is a being with faculties originally formed for the supernatural, but forced to content himself with the natural."†

A fourth argument against the propagation of original sin is introduced in the passage I last quoted, where the writer alleges that "sin is not imputed where the law is not; that those who have not heard Christ's words, nor seen his works, but are blind, have no sin." Here is a double heresy, for it is plainly asserted that those who have not received the grace of Christ are free from the law of sin, that they have no sin, and that consequently, sin is not propagated in them. And so the final conclusion is drawn, that "we are therefore born in sin by no natural law, but because it is good for us." And this "good" is ascribed directly to the will of God as its cause, so that it comes from Adam in no other way than as his descendants inherit his nature without inheriting his primal grace, and consequently inherit that state in which Adam would have been had he never had grace and never fallen into sin.

\* Rambler, May 1856, p. 340.

+ Ibid.

I observe that whilst the Rambler maintains that original sin comes not by propagation, he nevertheless repeatedly says that we “inherit Adam’s degradation,” and the degradation so inherited is here described as that fall “which each individual partakes, inasmuch as he is a being with faculties originally formed for the supernatural, but forced to content himself with the natural.” This notion is explained in the following passage:—

“But though man was degraded, *his nature continued intact*; there still remained in him the faculty by which he could enjoy God; what he wanted was the supernatural assistance to enable him to attain to the object of this faculty. Man, therefore, was left in an abnormal condition; created for one purpose, and applied to another; and at the same time incapable of receiving perfect satisfaction for the whole of his faculties by the most complete attainment of this substituted end. This degradation constitutes the *guilt* of original sin; *and it is only in this sense that guilt can be inherited*. ..... This degradation is the natural inheritance of every child of Adam, because the degraded is the natural state; the original was a supernatural state; nature can give no more than she has, and by the force of terms a supernatural gift is one that nature cannot confer. We inherit original sin, because we inherit nature, and only nature, by natural propagation.” \*

The doctrine of the writer is that the nature of the sinful and fallen Adam underwent no change beyond the withdrawal of grace; that what by nature he was before the fall that he was after the fall; that “Adam found himself upon the withdrawal of the supernatural gift in a state of mere nature;” † that “man was degraded, nature continued intact;” that another end was substituted “in place of the end for which he was created; and that this degradation constitutes the guilt of original sin,” it is “the natural inheritance of every child of Adam, because the degraded is the natural state.” He makes no distinction between the condition of Adam before the fall and his condition after the fall except in the presence or absence of supernatural grace, and in the substitution of a natural for a supernatural end. Hence he maintains that—“In the present scheme of Providence, mankind is divided into two categories—those in a state of nature and those in a state of grace;—that both have their own destinies; and that in the natural order ‘great and noble ends’ are proposed to virtue.” ‡ Hence also he maintains, not only the pious opinion that infants dying without baptism enjoy a natural state of happiness; but

\* Rambler, July 1855, p. 27.

+ p. 29.

‡ Rambler, May, 1856, p. 332.

also that the natural man who sins without grace will have a natural punishment assigned to him in "the curse of an eternal energy of brutalized instincts," whilst "the supernatural fire" is reserved for christian souls. In short, he argues that as "the beatific vision is not due to man's nature, therefore it is not the natural end of man; but he is born with some natural end, or else God could not have *originally* created him as he is now born, unless he created man without any destiny at all."\* And with this principle in view, the writer draws out a complete scheme for his category of a natural destiny extending through both this life and the next. It is fair, however, to add that he now and then hints at the possibility of there being no such condition as a man who has not come within the order of grace.

Substituting, as the writer does throughout this essay, *inheritance* in place of *propagation*, representing that inheritance as consisting in a degradation which reduces man to his natural state, arguing that original sin is nothing in nature, that "this degradation constitutes the guilt of original sin," and that "it is only in this sense that guilt can be inherited," that "the evil that man inherits is not absolute but relative," that "considered absolutely, there is nothing positively evil in the state of man," that "there are no natural means of propagating moral evil," because "it has no substance," that "the law of the propagation of moral evil must be sought not in nature, but in the will of God;" it is evident that the essayist considers this inheritance as something very different from propagation, for which he invariably substitutes it; and that by constantly rejecting the idea of propagation wherever it presents itself, he rejects with the word the idea and the doctrine of propagation. In short, he transfers the cause of this sin from man to God and so falls into the heresy of ascribing sin to God as its author.

To return to his exposition of the natural man, it is difficult in the writer's system, if it be not impossible, to distinguish what Adam was after his fall from what he was by nature before his fall, or to conclude otherwise than that the state of original sin is the mere condition of man without grace, whether prior to the fall or after the fall. He justly repels the idea of "a corruption of our nature" in the Calvinistic sense. He justly says that original sin is "no addition to our nature, like a lump of filth kneaded into the mass of our body;" but he also says that "original sin is a degradation, not a defile-

\* p. 331.



ment, the abandonment of man to his animal nature.”\* And respecting the animal nature of Adam prior to the fall, this writer entertains very strange ideas, ideas which furnish a key to the whole of his philosophising. This account of the state of the unfallen Adam, with which he identifies that of the fallen Adam, and that of his unregenerated offspring, is utterly irreconcilable with anything ever written or contemplated by any school of Catholic divines, or any class of the Fathers. I must request the reader’s patient attention to the passages I am about to quote, for though of some length, they are requisite for comprehending both the fundamental thought that pervades these essays, and their true significance. The author proceeds :—

“This view of original sin will also give us a consistant and reasonable view of the scheme of Divine Providence with regard to society. ‘Why,’ ask philosophers of a certain school, ‘did God place man on the earth, when He knew that he would fall?’ Is it not more rational to suppose that he was introduced into the animal world—which up to the time of his creation, had through myriads of ages been gradually progressing from the lowest to the highest types of animal life—not with a sudden jerk, not with such an immeasurable interval as is implied in the sudden introduction of the angel-like Adam and Eve, but with a slight step, an advance on the monkey little greater than that of the ape beyond the genus next below it? It would be more in accordance with analogy that man should come in as a link in a series, as natural science teaches, than as a magnificent solecism, a grand exception, utterly unlike anything else in nature. Man, in this view, has only progressed, he has never fallen; he began a naked savage in the woods, little removed from the ourang-outang; by his superior cerebral organization he has gradually advanced to what he is. According to the Christian view, he was exceptionally introduced into a world that for ages had been governed by the most uniform laws,—introduced as an angel, wise, powerful, and good, only to become almost immediately more devil than angel, foolish, weak, and criminal.”†

Thus far, the writer professes to quote a certain school of philosophy, and to contrast their opinions with the sentiments of Christian faith. We shall have later on to examine a passage in which the Rambler actually attributes to Cardinal Wiseman the doctrine that man draws his origin from the ape. In the next paragraph the essayist delivers his own opinion in the following terms :—

“Now so far as man is only animal, *there is no reason for denying*

\* p. 36.

+ p. 342.

*the progress here asserted.* In the natural point of view, Adam is simply the highest link in the animal series; he was not a civilized man; he had no notion of mechanics, or cookery, or music, or painting, or sculpture; *he only knew what God revealed to him.* There is no reason for denying that natural acquirements, as distinguished from supernatural, were at their minimum in Adam, and have made enormous progress since his time."

You, my Rev. Brethren, and I also would say, that there is ample reason in the book of Genesis for denying this order of progress, even although Adam could not have exercised those peculiar accomplishments which imply the existence of a numerous society. But to this part of the subject I shall have to return, as we shall find an article in the Home and Foreign Review where it is maintained that:—"Not only was the creation that great gift which called for all the gratitude of the newly-created man, but the created world was the only possible object of direct contemplation to him; neither his language nor his philosophy as yet enabled him to fix his thoughts and to discourse upon abstract and metaphysical verities." \* There also is it maintained that in the primitive religion, and infancy of language, there was no name for God, and that in that same "infancy of language, before mind could describe itself intelligibly by symbols, it was impossible to symbolize God by mind." †

Let us now follow the Rambler in his description of that mere nature which he assigns to Adam :

"Man, then, *quà* animal, was to follow the progressive law of the animal creation; but *quà* more than animal, as rational being, as a being made for the supernatural, he was not less gradually to discover in the course of generations the existence and the destiny of his soul. His creation was a miracle: it can hardly be called a separate wonder if his higher nature was from the first brought out by an abnormal method into prominence, in order that there might be no possibility of mistake concerning it. He had the supernatural gift, to shew him what his nature was intended for; then *he was allowed to lapse into the mere animal condition*, in order that it might redound to the glory of God of such stones to raise up successors to the fallen cherubim. In after ages, all religion, all culture, and all civilization, were founded on the tradition of this state, and were the organized endeavours of man to recall the golden age."

Here we stumble on the doctrine of the Traditionalists, but let us proceed:—

"If Adam had never possessed the gift, such tradition would have

\* Home and Foreign Review, October 1862, p. 453.

† p. 456.

been impossible; *man introduced as an animal would have remained so; he would have resigned himself contentedly to his lot, would have used his reason for the sole end of fortifying and assisting his animal instincts, of circumventing his enemies, and pleasing himself.* It would not have struck him that his miseries and subjection to mortality imported degradation, any more than the natural sufferings of other animals, their hunger and thirst, their ferocity and bloody passions, implied that they had fallen from a higher state. He would have accepted his subjection to starvation, to labour, and to chance, as patiently as the elephant or the sheep. It was only the tradition of a better state that made man perceive the evils of the present, and set himself to amend them." \*

Such, if we accept these views, was the innocent Adam by nature, and as God created him; an animal without development of mind, a savage with the instincts of a savage, and of the lowest type, with the minimum of acquirements. The writer puts into the mouth of certain philosophers a dramatic description of "the Christian view" of the origin of man, how "he was exceptionally introduced into a world that for ages had been governed by the most uniform laws,—introduced as an angel, wise, powerful, and good, only to become almost immediately more devil than angel, foolish, weak, and criminal;" he then contrasts this Christian view with another that represents the origin of man as a progress through myriads of ages from the lowest type of animal life to the highest,—“not with a sudden jerk, not with such an immeasurable interval as is implied in the sudden introduction of the angel-like Adam and Eve, but with a slight step, an advance on the monkey little greater than that of the ape beyond the previous stage.” “And so far as man is only animal,” the writer is himself of opinion that “there is no reason for denying the progress here asserted. In the natural point of view, Adam is simply the highest in the animal series.” That this is the actual view of man’s origin taken by the Rambler the next paragraph leaves us but small room to doubt; there it is said:—“Man, then, *quà* animal, was to follow the progressive law of the animal creation, but *quà* more than animal, as rational being, as being made for the supernatural, he was not left gradually to discover in the course of generations the existence and destiny of his soul.” How then was he enabled to discover the existence of his soul? By “an abnormal method” it was brought into prominence, that is, by “the supernatural gift.” And when this gift had shown him “what his nature was intended for; *then he was allowed to lapse into the mere*



*animal condition*, in order that he might redound to the glory of God, of such stones to raise up successors to the fallen cherubim." Animal, then, was Adam before the fall, apart from grace; into the animal he lapsed after the fall; and such animals are his unregenerated descendants, animals developed by progressive civilization into rational beings, where they are not developed by christian grace. Now in all this account of the aboriginal man and his successors, any endowment of his mind with the natural light of reason is utterly ignored. The animal man is supposed to have probably evolved from an inferior condition of animal existence in a long series of ages; and it is maintained that, without a transitory period of supernatural illumination, man would never have come to the knowledge of his having a soul and a destiny. This transitory condition of supernatural illumination, from which he was then allowed to lapse, was needful not only for bringing about the redemption, but also, in order to make him a social and a cultivated being. In after ages all religion, all culture, and all civilization, were founded on the tradition of this state, —were the organized endeavours to recall the golden age. "*If Adam had never possessed the gift, such tradition would have been impossible; man introduced as an animal would have remained so.*" And then comes that description of what Adam and his descendants would have been. "He would have resigned himself contentedly to his lot, would have used his reason for the *sole end* of fortifying and assisting his animal instincts, of circumventing his enemies, and pleasing himself." In short Adam is represented as by nature a brutal savage unconscious of a soul, and with the instincts of animal concupiscence for his sole impulse to action. He was not an intellectual creature, except by grace, and then but for a transitory moment. That natural and active illustration of the passive intellect, which Aristotle compares with the solar light; that light which the Fathers say is naturally *ingiven*\* to the mind; that light of intellect on which St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Basil, St. Augustine, and all the great Fathers, expand their noblest reflections; that illumination which St. Augustine calls the evening as compared with the rise of the morning light of the intellectual creation; that light of intellect which St. Thomas says is *connatural* to the mind, and forms and constitutes it; and Thomassin, that it is *inessentiated* into the mind; that light which Fathers, Divines, and Catholic Philosophers alike, consider as a created reflection of the uncreated light, a ray, however pale, shadowy, and

\* Inditum.

attenuated by reason of its introduction into our nature, yet a refracted ray from the all perfect image of the Father—His consubstantial Word, whereby *God created man to His own image*; that light of intellect, fountain of all the fundamental principles and unlimited notions of our understanding, and illuminator of all our experience; that light of which God, not man, is the author, which manifests to our soul its spiritual nature, and leads us up to knowledge of the Supreme Good; that light by aid of which, and by the exposition of which, St. Thomas overthrew Averroes and the other Arabian pantheists, as, by a similar process, more recent Catholic philosophers have conquered the reigning errors of the pantheists of Germany; that illumination of man's intellect, reflection of the Word of Eternal Truth, as the Fathers say, and of which the Apostle of love tells us, that "He enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world;" that light which "shone in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not;" that light which the light of revelation presupposes, as also the light of grace, where "*In thy light, O Lord, we shall see light,*" and where "*the light of thy countenance is sealed upon us;*"—that ingiven, that con-natural, that inessentiated light of the intellect, the author of these essays, here and elsewhere, withholds from the new created man, and from all his descendants, leaving in its place but the reminiscence of the transitory supernatural illumination of Adam, with which to develop with time his instinctive and selfish animal nature into the rational, the moral, and the social man. And so he says in continuance of his exposition, for no proof is ever alleged:—

"It was *only* the tradition of a better state that made man perceive the evils of the present, and set himself to amend them. Without an original supernatural state and a subsequent fall, *no material or moral progress would have been possible*; no great exhibition of God's power, mercy, and goodness, in raising man from an animal to an angelic condition, and above all, no redemption. *O certe necessarium Adæ peccatum, O Felix culpa*—O happy fall, out of whose rotten carcass God has produced such sweetness!" \*

The Paschal Hymn for Holy Saturday chaunts the necessity of Adam's sin for meriting so great a Redeemer, but not for developing the natural functions of the rational man. Returning to the author's views of the natural Adam, I will quote one passage more, and so conclude the exposition of this point. He says then, in another place:



"Pure soul has perfect liberty, because it can directly attain its end without using means. Embodied soul has this liberty destroyed or curtailed. It has no direct power, except that which it can exercise through the muscles of the body; it has no direct knowledge, except what it gains through the corporeal senses and through the organs of the brain; and though its faculty of will is free, yet it is subject to the continual harass of the passions and feelings, which present objects for its choice in season and out of season, without its being able to control them; its only liberty being that of assenting to or dissenting from anything proposed to it. This is the nature of man; but the supernatural gift of Adam ruled this chaos of passions.....Now the loss of this supernatural and auxiliary force evidently not only deprived man of a considerable portion of his freedom of will (namely, of all that prior choice which determines whether a passion shall be excited or not,) but at the same time gave the reins to the passions and instincts." \*

Keeping in view the author's fundamental maxim, that "the degraded is the natural state," and that "we inherit original sin, because we inherit nature, and only nature, by natural propagation," we are now able to comprehend what he actually means by that original and inherited nature. The natural Adam is described as having no direct power except through the corporal muscles, no knowledge except what is derived through corporal sense, and no liberty except that of accepting or rejecting; no liberty therefore of origination, and no liberty of choice. If this be the original Adam, as God formed his nature, or, to take the writer's suggestion, as he was evolved out of his ancestral ape, and if this be the nature which he still inherits; there is indeed no reason for admitting that original sin has wrought any change in his condition.

But out of these speculations, their author draws most singular conclusions respecting the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. He first lays down the position that "an immaculate conception is no violation of the order of nature: it is a miracle, but of grace, not of nature."† Then he resumes the position that "there are no means of propagating moral evil," and that "the law of the propagation of anything that can be called sin must be sought, not in nature, but in the will of God." Next he asserts that "We are, therefore, born in sin by no natural law, but because it is good for us,"‡ and that "original sin is a degradation, not a defilement; the abandonment of man to his animal nature." And so he passes on to this position, that—"It is not that

\* p. 27.

† P. 35.

‡ p. 36.

the germs of our bodies, existing in those of Adam and Eve, became morally contaminated and evil—for moral evil is in the soul, not in the body; and the soul of each individual comes forth from God's hands pure and uncorrupted, whatever may be its weaknesses and frailties. Nor does its union with the body necessarily induce guilt and degradation, except with reference to its own safety."

These positions are the premises to a conclusion to which we shall come directly, but I interrupt the argument for the purpose of pointing out how every one of these positions is directed against the fact of the propagation of original sin, and against the existence of any law of its propagation in human nature. The doctrine which is elicited from these positions stands as follows :

"God can if He chooses, and if He sees that it is consonant with His mercy, exempt any one from the action of the rule; and that one was so exempted, is now an article of faith in the church. Mary, and Mary alone, was conceived in the state of original justice. I will not attempt to pry into the reasons of God's predestination; but the fact that she alone was worthy of it, whether her worthiness depended on her predestination, or whether, as we may assume on the Molinist theory, the predestination followed God's foresight of her worthiness, on this theory we may say, that if God foresaw in any soul that He has created that it would persevere in original justice, He would confer the gift upon that soul. That He has done so to one proves that He might have done so to all; that He has done so to only one, proves that this one alone was worthy; for on this theory, predestination follows foreseen merit, or foreseen co-operation with grace."\*

The Molinist theory contemplates foreseen co-operation but certainly not foreseen worth or merit, considered as the meritorious cause of grace. Grace is gratuitous; the reason of the gift is not in man, but in the goodness, mercy, and benignity of God; whilst the meritorious cause of justification, says the Council of Trent, is "our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were enemies, for the exceeding charity wherewith He loved us, merited justification for us by His most holy passion on the wood of the cross, and made satisfaction for us unto God the Father."† And again the Council says—"If any one asserts, that this sin of Adam.....is taken away either by the powers of human nature, or by any other remedy than the merit of the one Mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ .....Let him be anathema."‡

\* p. 36.

† Con. Trid. Sess. 6, c. 7.

‡ Sess. 5, Decret. De Peccat. Orig.

The Rambler says that on his theory—"If God foresaw in any soul that he had created that it would persevere in original justice, he would confer the gift upon that soul." But original justice is the justice in which Adam was constituted before the fall, and not the justification of Christ, so that it would throw that man back on a dispensation which has for ever passed away. The Council of Trent says: "For as in truth men, if they were not born propagated from the seed of Adam, would not be born unjust,—seeing that, by that propagation, they contract injustice as their own,—so, if they were not born again in Christ, they never would be justified."\*

The Rambler says that "an immaculate conception is no violation of the order of nature: it is a miracle, but of grace, not of nature." But if it is no violation of the order of nature, it can only be because there is no law of sin in nature, and no universal contamination of sin derived from Adam. Whereas, the Council of Trent says:—"If any one asserts that Adam, being defiled by the sin of disobedience, has only transferred death, and pains of the body, into the whole human race, but not sin also, which is the death of the soul; let him be anathema:—whereas he contradicts the apostle who says:—*By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned.*" The Council excepts the ever blessed Virgin Mother of God alone from this decree. Her Immaculate Conception was a miracle indeed of grace, not of nature, but nature was the subject of that miracle; and in the preface which precedes the words of the dogmatic decree of Pius IX. the sublime words of a Father are adduced in which it is said of that Conception,—“Nature yielded to grace, and stood tremulous not enduring to proceed on its course.”

The Rambler says that—"Mary, and Mary alone was conceived in the state of original justice," and that "the fact that she alone was predestined for this glory, proves that she alone was worthy of it." The Apostolic and Dogmatic Letter of Pius IX. speaks also of "the original innocence and justice of the Mother of God," and calls it "the unspeakable miracle of God, even the summit of all miracles," but this original justice is in the same Letter exalted far above that original justice of Eve, and St. Augustine's words are quoted, how "more grace was given to her to conquer sin in every part." But when the Rambler says that—"an immaculate conception is no violation of nature; it is a miracle of



grace, not of nature ; it is no more a law of nature that man should be conceived with or without a supernatural gift, than that they should be born, live, and die, with or without the sacraments," he derogates from the grandeur and the singularity of Mary's gift, a gift conferred on her, says Pius IX., by reason of her "most intimate and indissoluble bond of union" with Christ. And when he says that—"Mary is the only one to whom God has seen fit to commit the treasure which Adam failed to keep, she is the only one whom he has trusted on that perilous height," the only one trusted "with that keen weapon, that beautiful but dangerous gift, with which Adam so sorely wounded himself;" in thus resuming the language of his essay, he seems to identify the original justice of Mary with the original justice of Adam, whereas the words of the Dogmatic Definition say :—"The Most Blessed Virgin, in the instant of her conception, was, by the singular grace and privilege of Almighty God, in view of the merits of Christ, preserved exempt from all stain of original sin."

The Rambler asserts and argues the heretical position that "original sin comes not by propagation," and that "there are no natural means of propagating moral evil." But, to pass over the Dogmatic Decrees of earlier Councils and Popes, the Council of Trent says : "If any one asserts that he (Adam) being defiled by the sin of disobedience, has only transfused death, and pains of the body, into the whole human race, but not sin also, which is the death of the soul ; let him be anathema : whereas he contradicts the apostle, who says ; *By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned.*" And that, "This sin of Adam, in its origin is one, and being transfused into all by propagation, not by imitation, is in each one as his own."\* And that, "In truth, men, if they were not born propagated of the seed of Adam, would not be born unjust, seeing that, by that propagation, they contract through him, when they are conceived, injustice as their own."†

The Rambler says, "original sin is a degradation not a defilement, the abandonment of man to his animal nature ;" but the Council of Trent says that, Adam, "being defiled by the sin of disobedience, has transfused death." And the Holy Synod declares that—"For the correct and sound understanding of the doctrine of justification, it is necessary that each one recognise and confess, that, whereas all men had lost their innocence in the prevarication of Adam—

\* Sess. 5, Dec. De Peccat. Orig.

† Sess. 6, c. 3.

having become *unclean*, and, as the Apostle says, *by nature children of wrath*, as (this synod) has set forth in the decree on original sin,—they were so far *the servants of sin*, and under the power of the devil and of death, that not the gentiles only by the force of nature, but not even the Jews by the very letter of the law of Moses, were able to be liberated or to arise therefrom.”\* And the Council again says that infants “are for this cause truly *baptized for the remission of sins*, that in them *that may be cleansed away by regeneration, which they have contracted in generation.*”†

The Rambler says that—“the degraded is the natural state.” That—“In the natural point of view, Adam is simply the highest link in the animal series; he was not a civilized man;” and that “Man, then, *qua* animal, was to follow the progressive law of the animal creation;” and that—“If man had never possessed the gift (of supernatural grace) man introduced as an animal, would have remained so; he would have resigned himself contentedly to his lot, would have used his reason for the sole end of fortifying and assisting his animal instincts, of circumventing his enemies, and pleasing himself;” and he represents the embodied soul as having no direct power except what is exerted through the muscles, no knowledge but what is derived through the senses, and no liberty except that of accepting or refusing what is presented; in short, no liberty of origination or of choice. “This,” says the Rambler, “is the nature of man; but the supernatural gift that Adam possessed ruled this chaos of passions.” And again the Rambler says,—“It is nothing that has been lost or gained for our nature that constitutes original sin. It remains, then, that the alteration effected by it should consist in something supernatural taken away or added, which may *possibly* affect the development, not the real existence, of our various bodily and mental powers.” And the change of man by the fall is expressed in these words,—“He was allowed to lapse into the animal condition.” But the Council of Trent says:—“If any one does not confess that the first man, Adam, when he transgressed the commandment of God in Paradise, immediately lost the holiness and justice wherein he was constituted; and that he incurred, through the offence of that prevarication, the wrath and indignation of God, and consequently death, with which God had previously threatened him, and together with death, *captivity under his power who thenceforth had the empire of*

\* Sess. 6, c. 1.

† Sess. 5, Decret. De Peccat. Orig.

death, that is to say, the devil, and that the entire Adam, through that offence of prevarication, was changed in body and soul, for the worse; let him be anathema.”\* And the Holy Synod says of all men, become unclean by the prevarication of Adam, that—“Free will, although attenuated as it was in its powers, and bent down, is by no means extinguished in them.”†

The Rambler says that original sin “is caused by the decree of the all-merciful God;” and that it “is only a degradation inflicted upon man for his safety by God’s mercy;” and that—“The law of the propagation of any thing that can be called sin must be sought, not in nature, but in the will of God, and in his attributes of love, mercy, purity, and justice.” But the Dogmatic Decree of the Council of Orange, says:—“If any one asserts that the prevarication of Adam was noxious to him alone, and not to all that spring from him, or testifies that corporal death only, which is the penalty of sin, and not that sin, which is the death of the soul, has passed through one man unto the whole human race, *he will ascribe injustice to God.*” The holy Councils describe original sin as prevarication, disobedience, injustice, uncleanness, sin, and captivity under the power of the devil; they declare the fallen Adam to have incurred the wrath and indignation of God, and to be defiled by disobedience; and that his sin was noxious to him and his posterity; those Councils declare that all men lost their innocence in his prevarication, became unclean, children of wrath, of the devil and of death, and that propagated of the seed of Adam, by that propagation they contract in generation, in conception, and through him, injustice as their own;—and yet the Rambler ascribes these evil results of the disobedient and sinful will of man to the will of God, who is represented as being, by reason of his goodness, justice, and purity, the cause of this evil, this injustice, and this uncleanness. When the fathers and divines speak of the mercy of God as intervening, they speak of that mercy which substituted the dispensation of redemption in place of the dispensation of original justice. For example, Perrone quotes this beautiful passage from Theodoret:—“When one sinned, the decree of justice delivered the whole human race unto death. But whereas all men were under the curse, and entangled in the toils of sin, through the justice of one, he gave salvation unto all.”‡

\* Sess. 5, Decret. De Peccat. Orig.

+ Sess. 6, c. 1.

‡ Theodoret Epit. Divin. Decret. c. 11.



The question as to how original sin is propagated from Adam to his descendants is one, not of faith, but of conjectural theology; limited however in its speculation by the boundaries of defined doctrine on the one hand, and by the necessity there is to avoid ascribing the authorship of sin to God, on the other. Between the views of St. Augustine and those of St. Anselm there is a wide range for the exercise of free discussion. Sufficient will it be here to note the words of St. Paul, who, speaking of Adam, says,—“*In whom all have sinned;*” and the words of the Council of Trent, that “Infants, who could not as yet commit any sin of themselves, are for this cause truly baptised for the remission of sins, that in them that may be cleansed away by regeneration *which they have contracted by generation.*”

Since the foregoing was written, the author of the essays has published a Postscript to a second edition of his recent pamphlet, in which, endeavouring to reconcile his denial that original sin comes by propagation with the doctrine of the Church, he flounders in hopeless contradiction, and confirms all that I have said respecting the unorthodoxy of his sense. He has endeavoured after a solution in these words:—

“My argument, therefore, is as follows; Original sin is essentially a privation; therefore it is neither a substance nor a positive quality. But everything generated or propagated is either substance or positive quality. Original sin, then, being neither of these, is nothing that can be generated or propagated, and therefore in this sense ‘does not come by propagation,’ because it ‘is nothing positive residing in the soul or flesh.’ On the other hand, in its negative aspect as a privation, it is inherited simply because the parent can give no more than he has; and while communicating his nature, is unable to communicate more than his nature. Thus original sin comes upon all the posterity of Adam, and comes upon them *by virtue of* their propagation or descent from him as its *causa sine qua non* or condition. But it does not come by propagation as its *causa efficiens.*”

Thus original sin is represented not as derived or transfused by propagation, or as contracted by generation, which are the expressions of the Councils, but as *coming upon* the posterity of Adam by reason of propagation; propagation is asserted to be its indispensable *condition* but not its *efficient cause*. This implies no more than that man must inherit the nature of Adam for original sin to *come* upon him. In its negative aspect as a privation it is inherited because his parents can give no more than the nature which they have. There is however something besides the mere nature of the

parents and the mere nature of the offspring, and this the Council of Trent designates as original sin and uncleanness contracted in generation and cleansed by regeneration. This cannot therefore efface the heretical position expressed in these and the like sentences:—"Original sin comes not by propagation;" and "There are no natural means of propagating moral evil;" and "The law of the propagation of anything that can be called sin, must be sought not in nature, but in the will of God, and in His attributes of love, mercy, purity and justice."

I think it will be well to contrast the author's theory with such an exposition as would be given by some Theologian of the very highest repute. And if I select Suarez, it is because he is of that school which follows the principles of St. Anselm, which school the essayist wishes to be considered as having himself followed; and because his exposition is one of the most comprehensive and minute to be found within the range of the schools. Leaving aside his arguments, I simply extract his propositions in the order in which they stand.

1st. "Against the propositions of Albert Pighius that original sin is nothing inherent in man—original sin is something *a parte rei* either privative or positive intrinsically inherent in man conceived of Adam. I am of opinion that this is of faith, as appears from the Sixth Session of the Council of Trent—'*If any one asserts that Adam, being defiled by the sin of disobedience, has only transfused death, and pains of the body, into the whole human race, and not sin also, which is the death of the soul: let him be anathema.*'"

2nd. "Against certain Lutherans who maintained that it was a substantial form, whence they called man *the seed of the devil*,—Original sin is neither a substantial form, nor a privation, remission, or transmutation thereof. This conclusion, though not defined in these words, is to be held as of faith, because most palpable errors would follow from the contrary supposition. For as a substance it would be evil and sin *per se*, which is the Manichean heresy. This is impossible, for sin is defect and iniquity against the law, and cannot belong to substance as substance. The error would also follow that man's soul is corruptible and transmutable. And we should likewise be necessitated to call God the author of sin, or else affirm that it was something positive that came from God, who alone can effect the transmutation of souls. We should also be compelled by this reasoning to give the devil the power of accomplishing this transmutation, which is heretical."

3rd. "Against the Lutherans asserting that it is concupiscence and disorder of the faculties. Original sin, truly and formally considered, consists not in concupiscence, nor in any defect of man's powers, as it were something natural, and that might be found in



man created *in puris naturalibus*, or that is in a man who is actually justified. Concupiscence, considered, not as an act, but as it is the sensual appetite prone to sensual things, which is liable to be moved contrary to reason, is not sin, and therefore is not original sin. For though it be derived from original sin, of itself it follows from the nature of man and would be found *in puris naturalibus*. It cannot be original sin because it is found in the regenerated, hence that darkness of the intellect and obduracy of heart, &c. cannot be said to belong to original sin, but they are its penalties."

4th. "Original sin is not a positive quality added to the soul, or to its powers."

5th. "The essence of original sin consists in some privation which truly and properly exists in man, and, after its own manner, is inherent in him; but it includes nothing as inherent that has a positively real existence. When St. Thomas says in obscure terms (q. 82, art. 1, ad. 1.) that original sin is not a mere privation, he speaks not of its essence alone, which he calls the *formale* of this sin, and which he places in privation, but of that inordinate condition of the faculties of the soul, which springs from original sin, and which, on account of St. Augustine's doctrine, he calls the *materiale* of this sin, and the feebleness of nature, and in this something positive is included."

6th. "Original sin is of its own nature the habitual aversion from God as our supernatural end, whence it deprives man of justice, or which is the same thing, of charity and grace inasmuch as they direct man to his ultimate and supernatural end, which is God. This is the common sentiment of Divines. Hence I conclude it was in this sense St. Anselm asserted that original sin is a privation of original justice. And I also conclude that this sin includes aversion from God, not as He is the end of nature but as He is the end of grace."

7th. "This privation is truly and strictly sin, inasmuch as it is voluntary aversion from God our supernatural end, and is contrary to His law in the manner in which actual sins are contrary thereto. The first part of this conclusion appears to be of faith, as may be seen from what we said in the first section, where we quoted the Holy Scriptures speaking of original sin as being truly sin; for if they were interpreted as if what is called sin were not strictly sin, it would follow that man had only the penalty of sin, whereas the Council of Trent affirms that what is taken away in baptism is truly and strictly sin. In explaining the second part of the conclusion, we must presume what was said on the six days of creation (L. 3. c. ult.) God when He created man, made him right, and constituted him the head of his posterity, and made their spiritual life and death dependent on his obedience. Hence on his sole disobedience hung the enmity or friendship of all who should be procreated from him. Adam was all human nature and in his will was morally included before God the will of all human nature. St. Paul says—*In him all*

*have sinned*, all transgressed the covenant in paradise, so St. Augustine says (1. De Bapt. parvul. c. 10) ‘All sinned, because all were one man.’ And St. Basil (Hom. de Jejun.) ‘We all fell, because we all rejected abstinence.’ And St. Fulgentius (L. de Incarnat.) ‘We all transgressed the testament of God in our first transgressing parent.’ And Origen (ad Romanos 6.) ‘Whilst Adam stood we all stood, when he fell, we all fell from the right path.’ Hence it is easy to conclude how this sin may be said to be against the law of nature, because it is completely opposed to that precept which all human nature received in its first parent. And hence we may understand how original sin is voluntary, not in the will of each but in the will of the head of all, because according to moral estimation, his will is reputed for that of his descendants.”\*

“St. Augustine,” says Suarez, “makes the sin of Adam as it turns him and his race away from God, their supernatural end, to be the efficient cause of original sin. And he remarks that though St. Augustine seems to ascribe it to the concupiscence of the parents as the instrumental cause, yet this is to be understood of that defective generation through which original sin flows in a certain sense and is transfused. In reply to the question, how the soul can contract stain immediately that it is created by God?—he observes that though the soul be created, yet man is generated of the seed of Adam, and the soul itself is created as part of the man, and is at once created and united, wherefore each man generated of Adam is under the law of God whereby the wills of men were comprised in the will of Adam.”†

In exhibiting the system of Suarez, I have shewn to what extent the essayist might have gone without declining from orthodoxy, and how far he has passed those bounds. In St. Thomas and other writers of his school, following closer upon St. Augustine, we should have found in the purely theological element, as distinguished from matters of faith, a more positive view of the instrumental cause as existing in human nature of the transmission of original sin in propagation.

There has grown up of late a fashion of selecting some line of theological speculation, and of putting it forth with more or less of a positive tone, as religious instruction for general readers. But our Pastoral Theologies speak of the prudence and discretion of keeping more to doctrine than to theological opinions, where the instruction of mixed audiences is contemplated, and the same rule of discretion is applicable to mixed classes of readers. In theological treatises, the opinions held by the various schools are brought

\* Suarez. De Peccato Originali, Disp. 9. sec. 2.

† Sec. 3.

together and compared; and though the author may give support and preference to one theory more than to another, the rest are equally brought before the reader; and their exposition tempers and balances the judgment in estimating as well the intrinsic as the relative value of the view that is advocated, whilst it saves the reader from confounding what the Church teaches with what she permits to be entertained as theoretical speculation.

I cannot satisfactorily conclude this part of my subject without adding one remark. The author of the two essays which have passed under our consideration, has emphatically stated in his recent publication, that he has drawn all that he has written on original sin, as to its substance, from Perrone. And he finds it a grievance that a provincial prelate should have condemned a doctrine publicly held at Rome by a professor in the Roman College. These statements are utterly irreconcilable with the language that the author uses in concluding the productions in question. At the close of the first of the two essays, he says,—“What I have written is my own private speculation.”\* In concluding the second, he says more explicitly:—“I have, dear Sir, in these pages addressed myself to some very difficult subjects which I have not found professedly treated in books which I have read. I do not suppose that I have been happy enough to escape errors in my arguments—perhaps not in my conclusions; but I hereby profess myself ready to retract anything which is contrary to the decision of the Holy See, or that of any competent Catholic authority.”†

There are sentences here and there which Perrone or almost any sound divine might have used, but those sentences generally look one way, the arguments and conclusions another.

In entering upon the consideration of the methods pursued by the conductors of the periodical in question, my attention will be confined to those essays and communications which regard revealed truth, or which affect those fundamental certainties in the natural order which revelation presupposes. For though, in their recent exposition of principles, the conductors of this periodical profess that they “cannot enter into the domains of ecclesiastical government or faith;” though they exclude from their range “all that concerns the ascetic life and the more intimate relations of religion;” though they conceive that “the scientific method is most clearly exhibited and recognized in connexion with subjects about which there

\* Rambler, July 1855, p. 37.

† Rambler of May 1856, p. 344-5.



are no prepossessions to wound, no fears to excite, no interests to threaten";\* yet can they scarcely in a single number refrain from taking up one or more of the sacred subjects which they profess to decline and avoid. And when we come to examine the series of writings that trench on the sphere of religion, and institute a critical investigation and comparison of their contents, we find that they are no mere incidental lucubrations, but are written on a system, and on a system which is not only hostile to the fundamental principles of Catholic prudence, but also of Catholic belief. This is a most grave assertion, and of its correctness, not the writers, who are understood to be laymen, but the ecclesiastical authorities are the competent judges. For should they, which God forbid, make their stand upon the superiority of their intelligence to that of their constituted teachers, they have entered upon the path where the principle of authority ceases, and that of private judgment begins.

In my first letter I dwelt chiefly upon examples of unsound principles: in this, it is more especially my intention by the aid of copious extracts, to trace their rationalistic system, and the means by which the Review seeks to plant that system in the minds of English Catholics. I have been repeatedly asked why, in my letter of censure, instead of limiting attention to what in comparison was moderate, I did not at once quote those stronger and more offensive passages which would have revealed the spirit of the Review beyond the possibility of question. To this I could only reply, that I was unwilling to exert what I then thought an unnecessary severity, and that I had hoped, by adopting a moderate course, to induce the writers to reflect upon the dangerous path which they were treading. That hope can only rest now upon the prayers of holy souls. My direct duty was to warn those who are committed to my spiritual charge, yet it was impossible I should not have some consideration for those gentlemen on whose writings it had become my painful duty to speak. And I will here observe, once for all, that if, in what I have written, or may write, there sometimes springs up a certain sharpness of tone; that is a necessity which arises from the nature of the subject, the brevity with which principles are contrasted, and the duty of estimating, where but short space is allowed, the value of the opinion or sentiment brought under consideration. When religion is in question, when souls are put in peril, and when the truth which he holds in his breast, and which he is

consecrated to guard in others, is assailed ; all men would feel it unworthy the spirit of a Bishop, should he express himself in the language of philosophical indifference. I am conscious how difficult it is to deal with any publication by quotations, without its seeming to the author that he is unfairly dealt with. From the nature of the case, the stronger and more concentrated passages are often taken, and what is milder is left behind. But if this be a disadvantage to the author, it is equally so to his commentator, as he would often be able to exhibit the grounds of his judgment more clearly, could he, instead of passages, quote the entire composition. Justice will always require that what is quoted should fairly represent the author's sense.

But I must warn the reader, that it is not easy to penetrate into all that underlies the letter of these writings, without careful analysis and comparison of part with part. Words and phrases are employed in a sense totally different from that to which the Church is accustomed, or with which English Catholics are familiar. The writers do not often define the special meaning which they attach to their terms as employed beyond common usage. For example, the words religion, faith, morals, ethics, phenomena, and forces, are used in argument in a way to mislead or perplex the cursory reader, who takes them according to their current English or even ecclesiastical definition. In short, there is a language of the initiated to which the adept alone has the familiar key ; and it is only by watching the evolution of the sense, that its real significance can be laid hold of and fixed. But after the sense of those terms is fairly got hold of, much that seemed obscure grows clear ; and much that seemed profound and mysterious, grows shallow. Notions and expressions are drawn, and that with some copiousness, from the vocabularies of the philosophist and pantheist writers of Germany ; and their logical methods are from time to time adopted—methods which presuppose a theory of the human mind and of the universe, which is utterly adverse to the common ideas of men, and to those of Christian faith. Hence that mysterious atmosphere which reigns over some of these productions. There is little indeed of that open and confident tone in which Catholic speaks to Catholic on the subjects of their common religion ; and one feels that the writers have something to conceal as well as something they would gradually bring into view. If there is boldness of style, and a challenging spirit, there is as often a hesitating manner that feels its way onward, and exhibits a consciousness that the writer has his own

difficulties to manage, and is not too sure that his notions are acceptable to his reader. Assuming the right of speaking as from the elevation of superior knowledge, the essayist pushes the rights of reason and science against revelation and the authority of its appointed teachers, whilst he would be thought the humble servant of the sacred cause against which his argument or doubt is driven. Thus we find arguments set in one direction, and orthodox expressions in the opposite. Doubts are started, alarms raised, unbelieving writers quoted, a sprinkle of orthodox references to some Father or great Divine brought in, and as the conclusion of the dissertation draws on, there is not uncommonly a winding round to terms that leave the impression of a Catholic spirit.

Some articles have but little in them to trouble Catholic thought: others advance the tenets of the initiated by a step or two: whilst there are others, at not too rapid intervals, which go directly to advance the special policy of the Magazine, and which bear on them, so to speak, the masonic mark of the fraternity. The most daring part of the work is not always entrusted to editorial articles, for correspondence carries the appearance in popular estimation of a lower editorial responsibility. Zeal, of its kind, there is in abundance, but warmth on the Catholic side of the question you may seek for in vain. The study of the philosophy of the abstract and the absolute has chilled the intellectual eye, and deprived the mental light of those divine sensibilities with which Christ our Lord has made his religion so beautiful to our sense, and so attractive to our spirit.

The position from which the reviewers prefer looking on their English Catholic brethren seems situated as it were in a misty dawn, through which the stars of German science are about to rise, and to search the obscure places of our faith. What we have faintly heard of, they have seen; and advancing through the twilight, they use the privileges of travellers who tell what they have seen to a simple hearted people. Great giants of intellect have they seen, with doubtings on their lips, and the rays of godless science beaming from their deep-sunk eyes. The light of revelation—of grace they speak but little,—will scarcely withstand those brilliant stars of genius. In short, they tell us plainly, that the only security that is left for our faith is to hide it in a napkin—to consider it as henceforth an invisible substance, and to abandon its visible attributes—all its sensible phenomena, to their terrible powers of criticism and doubt. Method they have so profound and brilliant, that those by which the church has triumphed for



eighteen hundred years against similar antagonists, are now, we are formally assured, no longer available. And yet by those very methods the Church encountered and put an end to the Gnostics, the Alexandrian Platonists, and those rationalistic critics who followed Porphyry and Celsus, and the Manichæans, and the Arabian Pantheists, and their Western imitators of the middle ages. And with the sceptical and egotistical Descartes, and the Jewish apostate Spinoza, the fathers and founders of the modern pantheists and rationalists, the Church has successfully contended in her theological schools, and by the pens of her philosophers, for the last two hundred years. Of those monstrous portents we may safely repeat what the Sovereign Pontiff, with so much solemnity declared in his allocution to the Bishops who surrounded his throne last Pentecost—that there is nothing new in them, nothing but very old errors, nothing but what has been often refuted by great writers, nothing but what has been condemned by the Church, nothing except the exaggeration given them by new forms and modes of expression. And as to these new forms of old methods, are they so very new that the Church has not had time to master them? Great Catholic metaphysicians have been long engaged upon them; and they fill the supplementary treatises used in our seminaries. Hegel, the last of the patriarchs of pantheism, died in 1831, and by that time the destructive critics were in full force, and in as strenuous a conflict with one another, as their pantheistic masters had been. In fact, Schleiermacher died the year following, long preceded as he had been by Semler and Paulus, though the real founder of that school was Richard Simon, whose criticisms even furnished materials for Spinoza. Soon after, the “Life of Christ” by Strauss made its appearance, nor was it long before he proclaimed that “the Christ of Hegel would for ever put down the Christ of the Gospel.” Who knows not of the blasphemies of these writers? and why should the Rambler repeat whole pages of them, as things unknown, and that in a tone of indifference enough to scandalize the most apathetic christian?

The only thing which is at this day new, is the right which professedly Catholic writers claim of separating science from God and His revealed light. Practically it is as old as the fall, and as inveterate as the world, but it is the first time that it has been set up as a defensible theory. And although so vehemently contended for by Dr. Froschammer at Munich, it appears to have originally sprung up in that school of all godless theories, the University of Tübingen. Since my first

Letter was published the works of Froeschhammer which the Review reflects, have been put upon the Roman Index. Still it may be questioned whether Julian the apostate has not the prior claim even to Dr. Kuhn, for he undoubtedly hoped, by his trenchant style of divorcing the secular sciences from religious faith, to exalt the claims of human philosophy over the divine truth of the Gospel.

From their self-vindication against the censure of Cardinal Wiseman, we may take an instance of what the conductors of the Home and Foreign Review mean by profound method. They tell us that:—

“To understand the certainty of scientific truth, a man must have deeply studied scientific methods; to understand the obligation of political principle requires a similar mental discipline. A man who is suddenly introduced from without into a society where this certainty and obligation are currently acknowledged, is naturally bewildered. He cannot distinguish between the dubious impressions of his second hand knowledge, and the certainty of that primary direct information which those who possess it have no power to deny.”\*

On the first part of this sentence, all that can be said is, that if the conductors of the Review are in possession of methods they have profoundly studied, and which enable them to understand the certainty of scientific truth; it is to be much regretted that they never give the Church, whose servants they profess to be, the advantage of knowing in what those sure methods consist. We seldom hear any other language from them than that of doubts and difficulties, unless where they speak of this method. What that method is, they neither teach their readers, nor exemplify in their writings, with any view at least of settling the religious questions which they raise. When the pantheists had created the mind of man, the universe, and the sense of language anew, a new logic became a matter of necessity. This was supplied by Hegel, though the common sense of mankind seems unwilling to accept the gift. Hard is the task to perceive “the certainty of scientific truth” in methods which, however much commended by the Rambler for their depth and brilliancy, have only succeeded as yet, as every critical history of them testifies, in furnishing the world with a library of philosophical speculations and of Biblical criticisms, which, in the multiplicity and intensity of their antagonisms, surpass all the battles of books that were ever recorded before their time. Only the transcendental method that discovers absolute identity in contra-

\* Home and Foreign Review, October 1862, p. 519.



dictories can ever elicit a dream of certainty from this class of writers.

But when it is said that "to understand the obligation of political principle requires a similar mental discipline," and we are told of the bewilderment of a man who enters a society where "this certainty is currently acknowledged;" these words, at least, bewilder the uninitiated. For if they speak of political theories those are certainly as perplexing by their numbers as by their rivalry; if of political opinions, they exist in countless conflicts; and if of the certainty and obligation which binds the conscience, that certainty brings us to the sanctions of religion. But here the words *certainty*, *obligation*, and *political principle*, are not to be taken in their ordinary acceptation; and to understand their meaning we must continue the quotation, which proceeds to say that—

"To accept a criterion which may condemn some cherished opinion has hitherto seemed to him a mean surrender, and a sacrifice of position. He feels it simple loss to give up an idea; and even if he is prepared to surrender it when compelled by controversy, still he thinks it quite unnecessary and gratuitous to engage voluntarily in researches which may lead to such an issue. To enter thus upon the discussion of questions which have been mixed up with religion, and made to contribute their support to piety, seems to the idle spectator, or to the person who is absorbed in defending religion, a mere useless and troublesome meddling, dictated by the pride of intellectual triumph, or by the moral cowardice which seeks unworthily to propitiate enemies."\*

This is characteristic. The obligation of political principle has glided in the course of exposition into religious policy and into the subject of historical honesty. But we have not yet reached the intended sense of the phrase *certainty and obligation of political principle*. For this we must go back two pages, where the conductors of the Review inform us that—

"Political science can place the liberty of the Church on principles so certain and unfailling, that intelligent and disinterested Protestants will accept them; and in every branch of learning with which religion is in any way connected, the progressive discovery of truth will strengthen faith by promoting knowledge and correcting opinion, while it destroys prejudices and superstitions by dissipating the errors on which they are founded. *This is a course which conscience must approve in the whole, though against each particular step of it conscience may itself be tempted to revolt. It does not always*

\* Ibid.

*conduce to immediate advantage ; it may lead across dangerous and scandalous ground."*\*

We can now better understand in what the obligation of political principle is supposed to consist, and why a Catholic, first entering into a society where this certainty and obligation are acknowledged, should be bewildered. Taught from infancy to regard his conscience as his practical judgment of God's law and his duty, as the secret admonition by which the divine light and grace inform him what that duty requires on the instant; instructed by St. Paul that—"Whatever is not of faith," (that is of faithful conscience,) *is of sin* : a good Catholic must be amazed when a whole society tells him of a "scientific method," and of "a mental discipline," and of a "certainty and obligation," which "destroys prejudices and superstitions," and which "in every branch of learning with which religion is connected, strengthens faith," although against each particular step of it conscience may revolt, and although it may lead across dangerous and scandalous ground. Here we may learn to comprehend how "the ethical is permanently distinct from the spiritual order." We may also turn to Hegel's logic for the only exposition imaginable of this new and profound method. This process would be, to say it briefly and therefore imperfectly, somewhat after this fashion. The new idea presented to the mind, and antagonistic to the habitual sense of what is right and true, awakens the conscience to revolt—that is, it calls up a negative idea, the *thesis* awakens the *antithesis*. But this negative is a fertile principle, and by a transcendental rebound resulting from that fertile principle, the mind ascends to a higher notion which embraces the two contradictory ideas in a harmony, where the denial of the conscience is blended in a loftier generalization of the mind, and so disappears. By a higher *synthesis* the revolting becomes a non-revolting conscience. The Hegelian principle is that—"Everything that is, is at once that which it is, and the contrary of that which it is." But in plain English, the mind takes refuge in some abstraction which is devoid of conscience; a method which is as old as the history of human sin and human weakness. And when we are told that though the conscience revolts at each step yet "the conscience approves in the whole," we have exactly represented this process of abstraction from the voice of our inward monitor, and this refuge in a general abstraction. The same may be said of the Hegelian mode of crossing over dan-

gerous and scandalous ground. To borrow an expression from the Review, by a process of abstraction the danger and the scandal are *bleached* out of the conscience. There is this much truth, however, in what some one calls the terrible Hegelian method, that one idea calls up its opposite. And it is scarcely possible not to remember at this moment the words of our Blessed Lord: "*Woe to him by whom the scandal cometh;*" and those other words of the Holy Ghost: — "*He that loveth the danger shall perish in it.*"

We are next introduced to an exemplification of this principle:—

"A rightful sovereign may exclude the Church from his dominions, or persecute her members. Is she therefore to say that his right is no right, or that all intolerance is necessarily wrong? A newly discovered truth may prove a stumbling block to perplex or to alienate the minds of men. Is she therefore to deny or smother it?" By no means. She must in every case do right. She must prefer the law of her own general spirit to the exigencies of immediate external occasion, and leave the issue in the hands of God."

This is an illustration of that political science which "can place the liberty of the Church on principles so certain and unfailing, that intelligent and disinterested Protestants will accept them." The true light of scientific method is the light of distinction, a light which is often needed in unravelling the compositions under consideration. A rightful sovereign has political right over his subjects; and the laws which fight not against God and against our conscience must be obeyed. But rightful sovereignty includes not the right of excluding the Church from the realm, and of persecuting its members. The doctrine here implied is that of absolute tyranny. It gives all right, even over conscience, to the monarch, and leaves no right, even in the spiritual order, to the subject. The Church has actually said that "this right is no right" as often as she has ordained her missionaries, whether for England, China, or Sweden, to face such persecution, and to make converts at all risks, in despite of such expulsory laws. Never could the assertor of this tyrannical principle have put it forth under the Catholic name in this country, had not our heroic fathers taken sounder views both of the rights of sovereigns and of the obligations of a Christian. But this is simply another specimen of that pantheistic principle of identity, and indeed one of those which its votaries have formally sustained. The individual merges his personality, which is *zero*, in the universal conscience, and finds that



identical with his own ; his own personal right dissolves into the universal right, and his individual obligation comes up again in the common law of his country. “She,” that is the Church, expelled from a country and persecuted in its members,—“must prefer the law of her own general spirit to the exigencies of immediate external occasion.” So must the Church not smother “a newly discovered truth that may prove a stumbling-block to perplex and alienate the minds of men.” If the Hegelian be not the logic by which such principles are justified, I confess I know of no other that can accomplish the intellectual feat. It is the only system which will explain the general principle laid down in the article, of which the above are particular examples, viz. that “the principles of religion, government, and science are in harmony, *always and absolutely.*”\*

I have now, my Rev. Brethren, to direct your minds to the substance of two Letters which were published in the Rambler of March and May, 1862, signed respectively D. N. and N. N. These are important as exhibiting the principles more openly which, in the article last considered, and in others of the same stamp, are advocated in a language of greater reserve. Although in the form of communications, they are of one mental origin with the editorial essays; and the reversed initials with which they are signed confirm the proof from internal evidence. Nor can the editors justly plead irresponsibility on account of the epistolary form for what they have fathered and circulated. And for once I may be permitted, as St. Paul was, to apply a maxim from the drama,—In a case of scandal currency, where we cannot come at the drawer of the bill, we should be allowed to come upon the endorsers.

The occasion of this correspondence was a passage written in a previous article upon the Inaugural Discourse pronounced by Cardinal Wiseman at the first meeting of the Accademia of the Christian Religion. This passage, evidently composed by one of the adepts, is as follows :

“It is, we presume, only for facility of illustration, and perhaps from old reminiscences, that so many of the Cardinal’s instances are drawn from geology and the physical creation. These sciences are of a subordinate utility to religion, even when cultivated in a religious spirit ; and when directed against religion, have not the same force as the sciences which are connected with her origin, her history, and her doctrine.”†

Using this passage as his text, D. N. commences his letter in these words :—

\* P. 512.\*

+ Rambler, Sept. 1861, p. 300.



"Sir—An opinion is expressed in an article in the Rambler for September, p. 300, which may be accurate enough, though it sounds strange to persons who watch the progress of controversy mainly or exclusively in England. You say that the physical sciences, when directed against religion, have not the same force as the sciences which are connected with her origin, her history, and her doctrine—that is, as the moral sciences.

"I suppose that by 'religion' you mean the Catholic faith and discipline, otherwise your assertion approaches a mere truism. For the moral sciences can scarcely be directed against religion itself, only against some particular forms of it. Atheism in history, politics, or morals, is impossible when those sciences are studied in their proper method; but *the physical sciences are in themselves atheistic*, for they cease to be physical, and become moral, when they are directed to the proof of a God, or derived from his supernatural acts. Physical sciences in themselves are of no religion at all; *moral sciences, even when atheistically pursued, become religious in their way; for even atheism may be made into a dogma, and may become the parent of a whole code of morals.* Moral sciences, then, are never directed to the annihilation of religion, but only to its perversion or change. Physical sciences, when directed against religion, only attack it accidentally,—in its points of *asserted* contact with the world of phenomena. *But here they wage a war of extermination; they deny the reality of the contact; they account for the phenomena which religion claims as her own upon merely physical laws, and they thus introduce and encourage the suspicion that the claims of religion are due only to the imagination of the pious, or to the imposture of the cheat.*"\*

Here we look the genius of evil in the face, and begin to understand the significance of the principle which separates science from conscience. You will remember what has been already affirmed as to the mental discipline by which the revolting conscience reaches moral, ethical, or political certainty. And now we are told that atheism in history, politics, or morals, is impossible when those sciences are "studied in their proper method." And that these moral sciences, even when atheistically pursued, are religious in their way; that atheism may be made a dogma and may become the parent of morals. In short, atheism is but a "change" of religion. The dogma alluded to as atheistical but not irreligious is, it may be supposed, the abstract, impersonal God of pantheistic "creation," and the morals spoken of are those necessitated relations of ideas that hang in the abstract void in which the pantheist contemplates himself. We here see the upper side of the wedge which godless science drives into religion; let

\* Rambler, of March, 1862, p. 387.

us now examine its under side. "The physical sciences are in themselves atheistical"; and "in the points of asserted contact with the world of phenomena" they "wage a war of extermination against religion; they deny the reality of the contact and they account for the phenomena which religion claims as her own, upon merely physical laws." We have only to add the suspicion which the physical sciences encourage, that the claims which religion makes to her phenomena "are due only to the imagination of the pious, or to the imposture of the cheat," and the description of the results of these atheistically pursued sciences is complete. It is not usual with the writers of these essays to speak of nature, of animal existence, or of corporal substance, they prefer the word *phenomena*, which commits them to nothing beyond *appearances*. We are fairly entering upon the scene of that havoc which the sciences, as the Home and Foreign Review maintains they should be followed, commit upon religion. Let us pass to the next paragraph, where it is said :—

"Now this seems to be the special form of anti-religious controversy at the present day: it is not in favour of any religion, but against all forms of faith. It strives to make faith forgotten, and to supplant the supernatural by the natural world. And where these tactics have not succeeded, still, as you own, moral science has assumed something of the indifference of natural philosophy. It strives to have no *abstract* preference for one rather than another conclusion; it has no final cause out of itself; it strives for truth in its own order, and for that alone. *By these means even moral sciences may be bleached from all religious hues almost as perfectly as the physical sciences; and the historical enquiry into the development of law, or of society, or of the moral code, or of politics, need no more refer to the existence of a God than the history of physiological or physical developments in the progressive changes of the earth's crust, or the successive appearances of new species in the fauna.*"

The obnoxious clauses of this paragraph are cautiously hinged upon *it may be*, and *it need not be*—as though their author were doubtful of their acceptableness. Moral science "*has no final cause out of itself*; it strives for truth in its own order and in that alone." And within this moral science the writer, as usual, embraces society, the moral code, and politics. Science then in these departments has no final cause out of itself. Their origin as well as their development are assignable to man and to nature. All law and morality, with all the family and social duties, spring from man's own *self*. We have got into the very heart of Fichte's system; or if the writer prefers it, into the impersonal reason of his chief

antagonist. And mark well how we are taught that this godless law and morality, this society and policy, need no more have reference to God when we enquire into their *development* than do the progressive changes of the earth's crust, or the successive appearances of new species in the animal world. All is evolution. And "the moral sciences may be bleached from all religious hues almost as perfectly as the physical." Morals then are, what St. Paul describes the pagan idolators of Ephesus to have been :—"Strangers to the testament, having no hope of the promise, and without God in this world."\* If the writer has another sentiment than this, he does not say it. If he merely means to describe the present aspect of anti-religious controversy, he yet very much adopts the hostile position as his own, and asserts the necessity of the atheistic pursuit of all science.

I will pass on to the extraordinary passage couched in the following words :

"But when physical science, or *the moral sciences in their physical method* of treatment, do impinge upon religion, the result is much more decisive than when moral science, *in its old form*, contradicts religion. In the latter case the opposition was always rather rhetorical than logical, and, like all rhetorical common-places, might be turned to prove either the affirmative or negative by an adroit reasoner. *Physical science, on the contrary, when it does smash any religious opinion*, smashes it hopelessly and entirely; and the only resource of religion is to deny its former self, and to retire to another position. It is true that physical science can only attack religion on those points where religion has mixed herself up with natural phenomena; but the number of such points is very considerable. In our own day how many such have been invaded by physical science."†

Among the physical sciences whose tremendous power over religious opinion is thus asserted, the writer includes "the moral sciences in their physical method of treatment."

Behold then those godless sciences in their terrible might, advancing ever onwards, and religion ever retreating before their blows; helplessly taking up one position behind another, and, by the very habit of retiring, establishing the impression of her utter imbecility in presence of the weak elements of this world. And here let me recall to mind the two formal propositions that I quoted from the same source in my last Letter, for with this new light thrown upon them their significance has grown into something portentous :—

\*.Ephes. ii. 12.

† p. 383.



“ Christians have been always overcome, but always because they have fought for more than the Christian dogma; because at any given moment they have failed to recognise that all except the central core of revealed truth is human addition, and therefore fallible, changeable, and obnoxious to decay.”\*

“ The Catholic faith then being limited to *the invisible substance*, and the few individual facts in which *this substance* is manifested, it is clear that *the authority of the teacher of faith is by the force of the term comprised within the same limits.*”†

What can all this mean? Are we indeed to understand from our new instructors that the Church, with which Christ dwells everlastingly, and which the Holy Ghost guides and inspires, has never understood her own teaching, nor the boundaries of her authority, nor the lines of her defence? Can it be true that God has subjugated the earth to man, and given to the Church the power to bless its various elements, to use them, and to consecrate them to his honour? And can it be equally true that it needs only for man to search them, and to speculate on them as if God were not, when lo! they prove themselves inimical to their Creator's truth and to his heavenly law? Can man then make them Manichean? Can he in his hostility to God inspire them with a godlike evil power of destructiveness? Or is it some evil deity who has them in his power, and who turns them in hostile conflict against the spiritual work of the God of Heaven? What else can we understand, when we hear that “the physical sciences wage a war of extermination against religion,” and that “physical science, when it does smash any religious opinion, smashes it hopelessly and entirely, and the only resource of religion is to deny its former self, and to retire to another position?” What can this mean, if it be not that at each new theory and instance that physics advance in the Church's face, she must confess her errors and withdraw in silence? And then there comes a difficulty which we must suppose that these masters of science alone can solve for her—When one physical theory sinks into insignificance, a phenomenon of no rare occurrence, and another theory arises to take its place, not pressing against religion on the same points of her indefensible lines, may religion then resume her former place whence she was driven? For it is clear, if we admit these principles, that, not to the Church, but to godless men, is committed the power, by their godless usage of this world's elements, of saying what is, and what is not religious truth.

The letter writer subjoins the following illustrations:

\* Rambler, July 1861, p. 182.

† Rambler, September 1861, p. 329.



"I was taught, as part of the doctrine of creation, that God made the world about 6000 years ago; that He made it in six days; that at first there was no death upon the earth; that lions ate straw like oxen, till Adam fell, when beast began to prey upon beast, bloodshed began, and has followed to this time. That after some centuries God drowned the whole earth with a deluge, and only saved alive the family of Noah, so that all history of the present human race begins from that patriarch. Moreover, I was taught that the deluge was the effect of the first rain, that previously there had been only mists, and that Noah saw the first rainbow when he emerged from the ark. Though religion has survived the rude shocks she received in the destruction or weakening of all these opinions, it would be nonsense to say that she has suffered no losses in the conflict."\*

The author began his Letter with assuming that the religion under consideration was the Catholic religion. As addressed then by a Catholic to Catholics, it is impossible not to consider these sentences offensive, and, in some parts, derogatory to the words of Holy Scripture. Puerilities are blended with the gravest questions. The uninstructed reader will naturally conclude that the Book of Genesis is attacked, whilst the learned in such questions, always comparatively few, will not fail to animadvert on the reckless indiscretion with which a series of statements like this is left unexplained. Their author may distinguish in his own mind between the Hebrew and the Septuagint chronologies, between days and epochs expressed by the term days, as some Fathers have interpreted, and between an universal and a partial deluge; but how is the common reader to understand this? How is he to avoid imbibing the impression that these "rude shocks" are not directed against religion in a far more sweeping way? Then by qualifying the word *destruction* with the word *weakening*, there is a vague uncertainty left on the mind as to what is or is not represented as destroyed among the enumerated traditions and interpretations. This is not to instruct but to perplex the Catholic mind. The simple will be scandalized or tempted; whilst the learned, if he call for it, will have his orthodox answer, however closely run to the verge of the abyss. After treating his examples in this ambiguous style, the principle is expanded in the following words:

"But perhaps you will deny that religion has the right to be mixed up with *any* questions which are within the province of the physical philosopher. *I am not disposed to quarrel with this posi-*

tion. I only assert that religion as it exists in the world has not yet come to this state of freedom. *The inveterate practice of eighteen centuries at least* has bound it up with certain views of Scripture, with certain interpretations of Moses, and Josue, and David, common to the Christians of Rome, Moscow, and London. If religion was *purged of all these points of contact* with physical science, the natural sciences would scarcely ever be able to reach religion, except when they were in combination with the moral and metaphysical sciences. *The real questions then would not be about Moses or Josue, but about creation, about the existence of a spiritual world, about the unity of mankind.*"\*

Supposing the Pentateuch and Book of Josue abandoned on all the questions which science may choose to dispute, here are three specimens of a creed yet left for us to continue our disputes upon. The question of the unity of the human race is claimed indeed by physical science, and the writer tells us that philology has taken up the method of that science; whilst the subjects of a creation and of a spiritual world are taken hold of by the atheistical metaphysics. The writer virtually intimates as much in the sentences that follow:—

"Still though the *substance* of religion should be *defecated from all points of contact with matter and physics*, yet its evidences must still remain in the sphere of phenomena, which is also the sphere of natural science. Natural science will always claim the right of discussing how far the miracles of Christianity were really miracles, or how far the physical anticipations or scientific prophecies of Moses are confirmed by the physical sciences. Physical science will always have something to say about the fact of a revelation so far as it depends on physical evidences. Historical science discusses the same fact so far as it depends on historical evidences. Metaphysics and morals go a step further, and inquire whether the asserted revelations are or are not possible; whether they are in conformity with themselves, and with the fundamental principles of conscience and intelligence."†

With the fundamental principles of whose conscience, and of whose intelligence? Not the conscience and intelligence of a St. Paul or a St. Augustine, not even of a Plato or a Cicero; but of a Hume, or of a Spinoza; of a Hegel, or a Strauss, or even of a Diogenes. For the test is that of a science which abstracts itself from God whilst examining the sacred cause of God; the result of which science has been, that its most ardent votaries in Germany proceeded to create God and His Christ anew, usurping a most impious spirit of supremacy for the human intelligence over that of its Divine

Creator and Illuminator. In the next paragraph we shall see to what an extreme the writer pushes his principles :—

“I have said that physical science makes no account of God, and is therefore atheistic, not by denying Him, but by ignoring Him. In the same way it puts aside the human soul. Physical science is materialistic, not necessarily by denying but by being obliged to forget the human soul. The soul is a free cause. The contrary object of physical science is to do away with all free causes, especially intermediate ones; *she may put up with a free Creator at the end of the infinite chain of natural causation, because she knows well that she will never get to that end, or be brought face to face with a power which can be bound by no necessary law emanating from a higher cause*; but the soul of man may intervene in every link of the chain; and therefore physical science has a greater grudge against man’s spiritual liberty than against the freedom of the Creator. Hence physiology has undertaken the task of proving that man’s intelligence is only a development of the intelligence of brutes, and that the boundaries between the lowest specimens of human intelligence and the highest examples of brutal instinct are evanescent, and, indeed, that man’s brain naturally descends from that of apes by an evolution which is universal in the animal world, and which gradually produces new species of living creatures out of older ones.”\*

Out of grudge against man’s spiritual liberty has physiology undertaken to prove that man is the product of an ape. Three quarters of a century ago, when Lord Monboddo and Le Mark brought out these degrading notions, the common sense of mankind laughed their absurdities to scorn; and now they are revived by Darwin and the Rambler. What will godless science do next? The next thing the writer does is actually to quote Cardinal Wiseman as favouring this opinion about the ape, he says :—

“The Cardinal in the discourse which you review, makes very great concessions to this principle. He says: ‘Let any number of new hideous apes be found in Africa, and hailed as a more remote progenitor by enlightened naturalists, I will be satisfied to end my genealogy at the first of the line endowed with reason, instead of pursuing it into the primevalness of ferocity.’ As much as to say, let us grant that man physically descends from apes; yet the first in the series that received the new gift of reason is our Adam, our first man, our real first father: the apes from which he was descended are no more our ancestors than the atoms of dust out of which, *on the supposition hitherto current among Christians*, Adam’s body was formed by God, have a title to a place in our genealogy. This admission seems to me like breaking a hole in a dike. It will be difficult to stop the flood of consequences.”†

\* Ibid.

+ Ibid.



It is at the miserable enjoyment of those, who, in their pride of science take a triumph out of their own degradation, that the Cardinal is directing his scornful irony. It is in the conscious dignity derived from the knowledge that our Heavenly Father made us in the patriarch of our race; as to the body of weak elements, but as to the soul, crowned with the honour of His image and the glory of His likeness; that the Cardinal derides those "enlightened naturalists," who go forth to watch the tentative struggles of an ape, in order to prove him capable of having become the father of humanity. But enough of this blasphemy against God and man. The writer knew in his heart that the thoughts here ascribed to him could never have entered Cardinal Wiseman's mind: nor could he well be ignorant that in this exposition of his sentiments, all the bounds of decency are exceeded. Had St. Paul found notions like these put forth by the science of his day, we may imagine what a terrible clause he would have added to the following sentence of his great Epistle to the Romans:—

*"For when they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, or give thanks: but became foolish in their thoughts, and their senseless hearts were darkened: for saying they were wise, they became fools. And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of corruptible man, and of birds, and of four footed beasts, and of creeping things."\**

"Yes," comments St. Chrysostom, "not to men, but to the image of a corruptible man did they change God's glory, and next they glided downwards to the brute beasts." Man, says the Apostle, is the glory of God, His glory, for He made him, and made him in His likeness. And men can be found to say, and other men beneath the canopy of heaven to repeat, that not to God belongs the authorship, the fatherhood, the glory of man, but to the one of all creatures that one fears to name without the guilt of mockery in such association. "Man," says the Holy Spirit, "when he cometh into the depths, despiseth;" he despiseth himself, and in despising himself he despiseth the God who made him. I cannot resist giving the wise comment of archbishop Kenrick on the text of St. Paul:—

*"Foolish in their thoughts—*the thoughts of proud men, who relying on their own intellect, indulge speculation on divine things, are generally absurd. They clothe their vain fancies with the garb



of philosophy, and frown down all opposition to their theories, as betraying gross ignorance."

Can there be a greater subversion of intellect than for a man to undertake the investigation of God's works, on the express condition that the testimony of their Divine author shall not be listened to?—or what must we think of a Catholic, who, whatever be his own sentiments, yet at the outset of anti-religious controversy, allows the enemy to claim and occupy as his own territory the very ground in dispute?

But by this time, my Rev. Brethren, you are weary enough of the Letter of D. N., and would probably wish to know what his respondent N. N. has to observe in reply. As one who moderates the sallies of an over eager partizan, the author of the second Letter smoothes and softens down the language of him who wrote the first, whilst he insinuates sundry distinctions into his positions. D. N. makes the battle against the positions held by religion press most hotly on the side of the physical sciences, whilst N. N. adroitly shifts the heat and press of the conflict to the side of the "moral sciences," which are evidently his own peculiar sphere. But then he envelopes those very physical sciences in the armour of the moral sciences, and thus arrays them anew within his own lines. There is something in all this that reminds one of the controversy of the encyclopædists, in which, whatever side was victorious, religion was equally the sufferer. N. N. confesses that D. N. "is animated by a sincere desire to promote the truth, and does not merely seek an occasion for controversy." He then takes up his own position in the following words:—

"Physical science has no weapons of its own by which it can assail religion, for it deals only with facts. Now, *between the facts of the material creation and the truth of revelation no antagonism is possible or conceivable.* They cannot approach each other without the intervention of theories, or conclusions borrowed from another branch of knowledge, and involving the moral sciences. *The facts alone cannot contradict religion, and the Church cannot defend herself against them; for as she possesses no authority to test their truth, she is unable to deny them.*"\*

Behold, then, the Church bound hand and foot, and reduced to utter helplessness in the presence of her physical adversary. If the Church has no authority to test the truth of physical facts, there is an end of the Incarnation; of the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Christ; of the sacraments, the miracles, and of a great deal of sacred Scrip-

\* Rambler, May 1862, p. 526.

ture and divine history. St. Paul has much to say on the flesh and its operations, on distinction of lawful and unlawful meats, and had certain abuses to correct in the material feastings of the Corinthians. What authority had the apostle to test the truth of these facts? The Fathers had to vindicate the material world, its nature and its origin. What right had they to do this? The Holy Scriptures handle the physical facts of the universe incessantly. Everything in this world; man, and therefore his religion, is physically clothed. Even the divine word of revealed truth is clothed in physical language articulated by human breath with lips and tongue, and written on material paper with material ink. And D. N. claims philology in his physical method, whilst N. N. also avows that "the monuments of revelation are elaborately dissected by the new philology." The old Rabbins had a maxim which is fraught with a great truth, to wit, that "nothing spiritual which descends into a lower sphere than its own, can operate in that lower sphere without clothing." The order of grace descends into the order of nature which it necessarily presupposes. Even God who is a pure and unapproachable spirit; that He may approach and may be approached, adopts our human language, and clothes the external expression of His life and attributes with visible imagery from the world He has created, that He may be understood by man; and that through His condescension to our earthly things, we may be endowed with His spiritual gifts. He preludes in the Old Testament the Incarnation which gives us the New. And as the Father Omnipotent fashioned from the slime of the earth the body of man in a wonderful organization and breathed into it a living soul; so the Son all-gracious took other earthly elements and by His all-potent word breathed into them the life of the sacraments. To religion belongs the function and the duty of blessing and transfiguring the physical elements of the world, of subjecting them to the service of their Creator, and of raising them to a higher order. The body of man is itself built up of every element that is in the earth, the sea, and the air, which are transformed into his life and informed by his soul; and these bodies shall arise transformed with glory, each soul shall receive back its own; and the just whom Christ shall have justified shall in those very bodies form the new earth, and in those souls the new heaven in which God shall dwell. And this transformation shall be the work of that religion which says by the mouth of its Divine Founder, "Blessed are the meek for they shall possess the earth."

And yet shall men arise, and with their godless science test the infinite patience of God, whilst they say that creation, its laws, and its might are theirs, and that with the might of its facts they will war with religion wherever it comes into contact, and at every point of such contact will force it to "deny its former self and retire to another position." I speak to those who profess to believe the Holy Scriptures—Shall God not say when and how He made and organized the world? If you can argue back from a bone to an animal you have never seen, it is because you have been allowed to examine every detail of a countless series of animals, and from similar laws of structure you can institute comparisons. Yet the real question, as compared with that of the earth, is how all these animals came to be constructed as they are. Successive structures presume the successive intervention of the constructor. In a series of machines successive organic changes compel us to think that the skill and power of the engineer have been repeatedly called into exercise. There is but one world within our reach, and we are not permitted to examine more than its rind. Its substances are not of an active but of a passive nature, moving as they are acted upon, and so, like the machine, requiring an author, sustainer, and director of their activity. Only the Omnipotent Author of the earth can authentically say, how it originated, how it is set in motion, what changes have been introduced into it, or when, and by what succession of interventions those gigantic changes have been brought about. Without the testimony of Him who wields the forces of the earth at will, there is no arguing with certainty from recent to continuous retrospective uniformity. We may conjecture on this or that hint; God alone can speak with certainty. To reject the engineer's account of the transformations of his engine, the architect's account of the transformations of his building, the legislator's account of the transformation of his laws, on the ground of securing greater certainty *a posteriori* from scientific induction, would be a very small folly, compared with the scheme of obtaining secure knowledge of the state and changes of the world, as it existed prior to all experience, upon the express terms of rejecting the testimony of its Almighty Creator, who alone guides and sustains what He alone brought into existence. Whilst we cannot penetrate by any sense to the substance of the least particle of the earth; the prospect of that spiritual side on which it stands in relation with its Creator, could alone enable us to speak with full confidence of the causes of its condition. Let us remember the apologue of the fly on the back of the elephant. Where



God has spoken, His word stands; it may be interpreted; it cannot be rejected. The author of this Letter has touched the truth where he says that it is "by the intervention of theories or conclusions borrowed from another branch of knowledge" that science arrays its facts against religion. Facts become images of the imagination; images of the imagination, most convertible of things, are ingeniously transmuted into theories of the mind; and theories they remain, the work of man, to whose disputations God has delivered up the world. Of the two premises presented by the Divine Goodness for our instruction, that one may illuminate the other; the votaries of godless science exclude the major, and confine themselves to drawing conjectures from the minor.

Unless there be some ulterior notion in the writer's mind, such as the Rambler asserts in other articles, to the effect that religion is by its nature invisible; it is impossible to comprehend why he denies that the Church can defend herself against facts, now reduced by him to mental theories, on the ground that as "she possesses no authority to test their truth, she is unable to deny them." It is enough that she denies the ungodly theories in which the facts are distorted and religion denied.

It is singular that whilst these writers see religion incessantly put to flight by physical theories, they never suspect the possibility that any theory may have to yield before the light of religion. The power of matter over the higher intellectual light would seem to be absolute. N. N. considers it a grievous error to say, as D. N. does, that "moral science is atheistical because 'it strives for truth in its own order, and in that alone.'" Yet he himself says, a few pages later, that "the real danger of physical science is not its godlessness but its popularity." And as he contends for the study of moral science in its own sphere, and in "that method of investigation which is supplied by itself," it would seem to be against the word rather than against its signification that he raises his objection. Certainly the word "atheistical" is startling to the Catholic mind.

I proceed with the next quotation:—

"Again: it is altogether untrue that the opposition of moral science to religion, when it does oppose, 'is always rather rhetorical than logical.' Is this the case with inquiries into the history of the Church, the continuity of tradition, the consistency of doctrine with the text of Scripture, the rule of faith, the immortality of the soul, the nature of sin? Moral science has something to say to each of these fundamental questions; and the Church could not survive a



single breach such as Strauss, or the school of Tübingen, or the speculations of Spinoza, Condillac, or Hegel, would, if they succeeded, open in her most important defences; and these points, which to her are essential, and which require the light of the sciences to demonstrate, are innumerable. They include the whole of the doctrine of the Church, which is open to philosophical discussion; her history, which must encounter the scrutiny of critics; and the monuments of revelation, which are elaborately dissected by the new philology. *A single defeat on this wide expanse, and her authority would be at an end. The danger from moral science, and the necessity of preserving its alliance, extend, therefore, universally over every portion of Christian doctrine; and every failure must be decisive, every injury mortal.*”\*

This is sufficiently alarming. D. N. almost terrifies the Christian out of his faith by the irresistible powers of physical science; whilst N. N. exhibits religion as endangered at innumerable points—in the Church’s history, tradition, text of her Scriptures, doctrine, rule of faith, teaching of the soul’s immortality, and views of the nature of sin, in all which faith is exposed to the discussions of philosophy, to the scrutiny of critics and the dissections of philology. And yet these moral sciences rest not on demonstration but on evidence; and the Church herself is equally built upon evidence. “The Church could not survive a single breach such as Strauss, or the school of Tübingen, or the speculations of Spinoza, Condillac, or Hegel, would, if they succeeded, open in her most important defences;” and these essential points are innumerable. “The danger from moral science, the necessity of preserving its alliance, extend therefore, universally over every portion of Christian doctrine; and every failure must be decisive, every injury mortal.” From all this danger, an alliance with the moral science and the methods cultivated by her infidel antagonists, is then the Church’s one safety. And yet if we take the foes here named as examples of the moral science whose alliance and whose method are so essential for the Church; this science and method is that of pantheists and sensualists. There is Spinoza, author of the material God, the one and only substance of the universe; Condillac, the sensualist disciple of Locke; Strauss, the satirical and atheistical assertor of the superiority of Hegel’s impersonal God over the God whom we worship; and Hegel himself, who has created a new, abstract universe, with himself transferred into its centre. The Church, through her learned men,

takes cognizance of all methods, but she relies solely on her own. She is essentially a witness, and her powers of defence rest finally upon the divine grace and the inflexible promise of unfailing assistance. There can be no more mischievous way of representing the Church than as a scientific society put on its defence by other scientific societies and schools of thought; and then exhibited as in danger of receiving death wounds on the countless points of her history, monuments, essential traditions, and doctrines. There is a moral prudence, queen of the virtues, which is worth more than all these new moralities; and it is no part of that prudence to put exaggerated notions into people's heads about the dangers which the infallible Church incurs from infidel theories. If the writer says that he speaks not of danger to the Church, though his words bear that significance; if he only contemplates danger to individuals; he is taking the way to create those dangers by this exaggerated way of representing their extent and force.

After expressing his opinion that "Physical science can hardly bear on dogma in any intelligible way;" that "perhaps the only dogma the proof of which could be imagined to depend on natural science is original sin;" and that the only problem left for naturalists to solve is that of the unity of the human race; the writer enters on the subject of the Bible, and responds to the remarks of D.N. in these terms:—

"It is astonishing to me that any Catholic should mix up religion with such ideas as are here recited, though I can easily believe a Protestant in his religion might be shaken by the progress of science on these points. I trust it may be to experience of this kind your correspondent alludes, and that there is no reason for the suggestion implied, that Catholics are so imperfectly instructed as to place the chronology of the Hebrew version, the universality of the Deluge, and the habits of carnivora, among the tests of infallibility, and the articles by which the Church must stand or fall. Protestants occupy towards the letter of the Bible a position different from our own. Having no authority to define and explain the portions which are of doctrinal importance, they are unable to distinguish between the authority of different passages. If the literal interpretation of one text is shaken, there is nothing to protect any other from the same result, and there is no refuge against a dissolving criticism. *But the Catholic avoids a collision between creation and revelation, because he possesses a criterion, which separates in the Bible its natural and its supernatural character, and informs him of those things which it teaches, and which belong neither to history nor to physical science.* The doctrine of his Church is not mixed up with the explanation of passages that do not affect religion. With reference to these things,

a current opinion prevails in every age; but it is always formed according to the measure of the knowledge of that age; it consequently varies, and cannot afford any support to religion. The only thing which is invariable about it is the certainty that knowledge of this kind cannot be trusted by faith. The normal condition is not harmony, but a perpetual disharmony between faith and knowledge, a constant alteration of the data on which the comparison rests, *a successive surrendering of established positions*, and modification of theologumena founded upon them. *Religion profits by the abandonment of every opinion of this kind that is abandoned.* It purifies belief by removing from it the contamination of error, and strengthens it by taking away a threatening occasion of doubt for those who are imperfectly educated in religion or science. *Your correspondent confounds truth with faith, and speaks of religion when he means in fact theology.* It is true that almost every step taken by the Church in the establishment of her doctrine has been accompanied by a loss of souls, and that heresy is often, as it were, the signal of development. But to say that religion suffered by the confutation of false opinions, is to assume that she has to dread the discovery, and is in league with error for its preservation, not with truth for its advancement.”\*

This long extract is a fair specimen of the unconscious shifts to which a writer has recourse, who feels the difficulty of giving a straightforward expression to all he thinks. In the previous extract, the Church is represented as exposed to attack on all points of her history, doctrine, tradition, and Scriptures, and that if a breach is made at any one point, the whole authority of the Church fails; but here that interminable line of defence is contracted within far narrower limits than the Church herself can allow of. The Church is represented as separating the natural from the supernatural character of the Bible, and as limiting what the Bible teaches to those things “which belong neither to history nor to physical science.” Thus the Bible as a history is reduced to a mere human record without a supernatural guarantee. And yet the evidence of the Church rests mainly on her history; and that history, from the creation of man down to the Acts of the Apostles, is chiefly contained in the inspired Scriptures. And moreover there are sundry physical facts recorded in Scripture which are either elements of faith or evidences of faith.

As the principles here exhibited have been but too freely used both by the Rambler and the Review, it may be well to bring forward, once for all, that authoritative direction of the Council of Trent by which all Catholic writers are bound to



be guided in their use of the Scriptures. After the Fathers have declared that the Council “receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety and reverence, all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament, seeing that one God is the author of both;”—as also the traditions, “as well those pertaining to faith as to morals—as having been dictated either by Christ’s own word of mouth, or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession;” a list of the books is given, and then the Council decrees:—“If any one receives not, as canonical, the said books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin vulgate edition; let him be anathema..... Furthermore, in order to restrain petulant spirits, it decrees, that no one, relying on his own skill, shall,—in matters of faith, and of morals pertaining to the edification of Christian Doctrine—wresting the Sacred Scripture to his own sense, presume to interpret the said sacred Scripture contrary to that sense which Holy Mother Church,—whose it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures,—hath held and doth hold; or even contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers; even though such interpretation were never (intended) to be at any time published.”\*

It is very difficult to reconcile the spirit of this decree, or even its letter, with that of D.N., when he talks about—“The inveterate practice of eighteen centuries at least, bound up with certain views of Scripture, with certain interpretations of Moses, Josue and David, common to the Christians of Rome, Moscow, and London.” It is equally difficult to harmonize that spirit with the words of N. N. when he says that—“The Catholic avoids a collision between creation and revelation, because he possesses a criterion which separates in the Bible its natural from its supernatural character, and informs him of those things which it teaches and which belong neither to history nor to physical science.” Take the largest latitude allowed to divines in discussing the nature and extent of Scriptural inspiration; this can never allow the history, or the narrative of facts which physical science may embrace, as contained in the Scriptures, to be excluded from an amount of inspiration sufficient to protect the inspired record from substantial error. Nor will it allow the rejection of uniform and continuous interpretation as D.N. seems to reject it.

When N. N. draws so sharp a distinction between religious



faith and religious truth, and between religion and theology, and when he speaks of the gain which faith obtains by "a successive abandonment of established positions," &c. though he may soften his terms before he concludes; yet in considering the relations of the moral, that is, the critical sciences to religion, he puts himself too nearly on a parallel with the position maintained by D. N. with respect to the relation between the physical sciences and religion. Unquestionably there is what I may call an *outer* and an *inner* theology, a variable and a fixed element in that loftiest of sciences. Yet they run so into each other that it is impossible to treat them like separate bodies, or practically to class them in distinct compartments. There is a theology, the conclusions of which rest so completely on revealed premises that they cannot be separated from faith. And there are other conclusions elicited from revealed propositions by the direct appliance of fundamental certainties in the natural order, which therefore present a most certain and unanimous theology; or what is equivalent to it. Many things go to form the integral belief of the Church that were never formally defined; for there is an unwritten as there is a written rule of faith, a statute and a common law of believing. The decrees of faith but incorporate and fix the common belief in formal terms as circumstances call for dogmatic declarations. The Church treats not her decisions as the Anglican authorities treat their Articles, straining to reduce them to their minimum of sense, in order to accommodate them to a society devoured with unbelief. Her decisions live in the habits of the faithful, and express not more but less than her entire belief. They are sustained, and environed by a yet larger and more comprehensive tradition; they are expanded by the theologian, and by the preacher, and by the pious meditations and practices both of clergy and laity. They come out of the fulness of that common and unwritten tradition, as well as from the deposit of Holy Scripture; and there yet remain unfixed by decrees, both doctrines of faith, and dogmatic facts, and moral laws, and fundamental principles of the Church's constitution and discipline, without which the Church would not be what Christ has made her. Under whatever pretext of science or of criticism, and under whatever plea of their not being defined; to attempt to strip religion of these doctrines, or of that inner theology which is inseparable from faith, or from fixed principles such as faith presupposes, or even from the theology generally taught and preached; or to separate religion from that sacred history on which her evidence, her

doctrine, or her edification reposes; would be to incur the charge and the sin of inculcating, as the case may happen to be, heresy, or what approximates to heresy, or is rash or scandalous, or offensive to pious ears.

But there are other theological conclusions in which divines have not the same confidence, and about which they freely diverge from each other. These are such as are sought to be deduced from revelation and first principles by a longer or more obscure process; or are conjectural theories; or are undetermined by reason of the complication or the variable-ness or the hidden character of the facts with which their application is concerned. Then there is the apologetic procedure drawn from the analogies of Catholic teaching with the principles, habits of thought, and experiences of its adversaries. And where divine mysteries are impervious to the intelligence, there is the method of meeting the charge of inherent contradiction, by exhibiting theories on which the supposed contradiction disappears. For to put down the charge of absurdity it is enough to shew how a mystery may be, without proving that so it is. And much of the theology concerning the higher and more recondite mysteries is of this kind; having a certain probability more or less. But it is not this outer theology only, most valuable as it is; but also that inner and universal theology, and the universal traditions of the Church, and the letter of Scripture, which theoretically in the two Letters I have quoted, and practically in certain articles, the Rambler, and, as I shall shew, the Home and Foreign Review, exclude from their definition of religion.

What could only be of direct supernatural communication in Holy Scripture, must have a direct inspiration; and what in its historic records was seen or heard of in a human way, must at least claim preservation from substantial error. Every portion of the Scriptures requires that we admit a special guidance of the Holy Ghost, and in whatever the Sacred authors wrote there is a meaning intended by God which cannot be less than true. As the soul is the life of the body, so is tradition the life and sense of Holy Scripture. Science pursued in a religious spirit, beneath the influence of that tradition, gives more precise knowledge of literary details. It ascertains the genuineness of texts, illustrates the value and force of words, collates text with text, throws light on historical, topographical, and other scientific facts; on customs and modes of thought. Syria, Babylonia, or Greece supplied the Prophets and Apostles with the tongues in which they wrote; but those tongues underwent certain

transmutations in their mouths. With the conversion of nations to God, comes a consequent conversion of their languages. Heathen notions pass away from their accepted sense, and sacred notions take their place: the whole mind and feeling of a language undergoes this conversion. And when a people have long fallen from God, their language suffers an equivalent degradation. Even in the same social state, sects that have separated from the Church have a religious and even a philosophic language which accurately reflects their sectarian ideas and sentiments. The sons of Juda and the Samaritans, at the time our Lord came on earth, were probably as wide apart from each other in mind and in the sense of their religious language, as Catholics and Protestants are at this moment. But when it comes to illustrating the sense of inspired writings from the literature of heathens, the events of sacred history from pagan modes of viewing the same facts, and supernaturally inspired ideas from the theories of godless philosophers; the two points of view stand far more remote asunder, on very different levels, and in very different lights. Nor are the powers of vision equal, for the humble Christian thinks in God and with the Church, and sees higher into the mind of God; whilst the proud man of science thinks within himself. The humble Catholic will speak a language, simple, sound, and rich in divine truth, though poor in its human expression. The self-inspired philosopher will speak in a refined and polished style, a beautiful form encasing a thin and feeble substance. The Fathers of the Church improved not their style by their conversion from pagan philosophy; for their thoughts were too full to be contained, and their attention too much absorbed in the substance, to spend themselves in the polish of letters. St. Augustine found the Scriptures rude and St. Ambrose uneloquent by the side of his Manichean instructors, until he had entered into the interior things of divine truth. Then the grace of humility not only puts the soul in its correct point of view as to divine things, but it opens the understanding; whilst the godless philosopher not only has his mind closed up within himself, but undergoes an intellectual self-inebriation that dazzles his sight with a false glare, and falsifies his perception of whatever rises above the sphere of his nature.

The world serves the Church in many ways, but it enters not into her sanctuary. Egypt gave her treasures against her will to adorn the Tabernacle; it was under the guidance of God's Prophet that the men of Israel to whom God had



given the skill, fitted those treasures into the Sanctuary in which God Himself deigned to dwell. Profane writers contribute useful materials for illustrating God's work, but only men of grace can use them for that purpose. It is among the facts of Christian philosophy that St. Thomas converted Aristotle's philosophy by a sort of double conversion; for that philosopher's writings were rescued from Mahometan pantheism as well as from Greek paganism, and were induced to speak the language of Christian truth. But let not the conductors of this Review imagine that such an order of things can be reversed by a conversion of Catholic truth to godless science. Let them not imagine that by aid of this godless science they can do anything for the service of the Church, or use her name in any such relationship except to impede her work. The Church cannot give up a single tradition, a single passage of Scripture, or a single conclusion of theology, for the sake of harmonising with English rationalists or German pantheists. This would be to abandon the principle of the supernatural order, and to put the Church on a common level with the world. The errors of science pass as its speculations fluctuate; the truths of God abide, and the descendants of those sons of error will stand in need of all their light.

If we were to accept all the principles of the two Letters, which I am unwilling to pursue further, it would be impossible to escape the conclusion that science without God is infallible, whilst the Catholic religion is incrustated with errors. On the Church they incessantly inculcate the duty of reforming her teaching; whilst science is treated like fate, as something irresistible and irreformable. The general spirit of those Letters will furnish the best exposition of the spirit in which N. N. admonishes the Church in the words I shall now quote:—

“It is a religious duty as well as an intellectual necessity to strive continually to bring existing faith into agreement with increasing knowledge, to reconsider old solutions in obedience to new problems, and to penetrate further into the depths of divine truth which none can fathom.”\*

I have next to draw attention to three habits which the conductors of the Review but too frequently bring into exercise, when they come in contact with religious subjects. They have a way of raising sceptical questions, and of leaving them on the mind of the reader without imparting their solution.



They will quote rationalistic and infidel writers, even of the worst stamp, and not only commend the genius of those blinded men, but insinuate the difficulty which, as they think, Catholic authors find in coping with them. The most unsound principles, the most unchristian, nay, the most blasphemous sentiments are introduced into the pages of the Review, and that without the exhibition of any real sense of repugnance or dislike to what they set before the reader, even though it may trouble the spirit of reverence, wound the religious sense, or derogate from what is due to the honour of God and His truth. Were these obnoxious sentiments quoted for the purpose of grave reprobation, or with the view of solid refutation, this conduct would be comprehensible; but they are brought in with a philosophical indifference, varied, in one remarkable instance especially, with pæans chaunted to the profundity and brilliancy of their authors, and are then left with but one or two cursory remarks on the character of their errors for all reply. They have moreover a practice of striking at some truth which is generally received by Catholics, or some received interpretation of Scripture, not always under the plea of exhibiting the dangers to which religion is exposed, but as a professed exhibition of the reviewer's own sentiments. Of this method, I shall bring out a remarkable example from the October number of the Home and Foreign Review.

Within no isolated volume is this evil spirit of temptation confined, to be dealt with cautiously and labelled like a jar of poison. But a Miscellany of writings, suited to various tastes and capacities, and wearing the bloom of novelty, comes periodically on the drawing-room table, accessible to young and old, learned and unlearned, to those who are, and to the majority who are not prepared by their mental training to meet the tremendous questionings of the soul. A number of the Review is taken up, it may be casually for but a page or two, it may be for more deliberate reading; the sceptical question then penetrates the unguarded soul like a sting, a smart phrase or two nails it in the memory, and in the weak hour when the heart is lifted with pride, the mind contracted with brooding, or the intellect puffed with vanity, the devil finds a vein open for the insinuation of his wiles; that sceptical question joins itself to other sceptical questions recalled from the same Review, and the dark habit of questioning faith is formed by insensible degrees. Two or three such questions put shrewdly to man in his innocence brought about the fall.

It is with considerable reluctance that I proceed to exemplify the methods of which I have spoken. I shall however select two articles which are conspicuous amongst productions of the kind. The first of these is a long review of Döllinger's History of Christianity, which appears in the number of the Rambler for January 1861. A considerable portion of this article is devoted to an exposition of the infidel systems of Germany which have emanated mostly from the critical school of Tübingen. The results of those systems are drawn up almost in the form of creeds, and are left to the reader with but here and there an explanatory remark appended, and an amount of commendation for the genius of their authors which is never awarded to Christian writers, unless it be to the learned author whose work is under review.

After speaking of Wolf and Niebuhr as the originators of the school of dissolvent criticism, and of their success in reducing Homer and Livy to a series of myths "such as belong to the simple childhood of a people, but which, for various purposes, have been collected and given as facts;" the writer says:—

"That which was proved regarding Homer might be true of Moses. It might be that arguments analogous to those which shewed the Iliad to be a collection of unconnected pieces would produce similar results on the book of Genesis. And if Livy united the poetical legends of the heroic ages to adorn and to corroborate the patriotism of the Romans, why might not the history of Samson or of David have been compiled by a Jew from some equally praiseworthy motive? Accordingly, during the first quarter of the century, the Old Testament was the object of attacks which were soon extended to the New. What was settled concerning the holy books of the Jews might be found equally true with the holy books of the Christians. At the time when this began there was no Catholic theology in Germany, and Schleiermacher at Berlin was the great doctor of Protestantism. He was also the first of the more unscrupulous critics. He treated the history of the New Testament as Niebuhr had treated the history of Rome, and argued that the discrepancies of the several books were due to the fact that different traditions had been used by the different writers. But not only did the Gospels betray the existence of distinct traditions, but the Epistles of St. Paul betray the hand of distinct authors. Many of the epistles were therefore rejected as spurious, and the Gospel narratives were to be credited according to the value of traditions to which each fact could be traced. In this way the method used by the classical scholars was applied to the New Testament by the greatest authority amongst divines. Still it was but an external

criticism, which might be allowed without surrendering the substance of the history of Redemption.”\*

To the Biblical and Theological scholar these things are of course not unknown; but in what a style to bring them for the first time under the notice of the unlearned? And this is followed by a commendation of the impious Hegel, and by praise of the scientific lights which the results of his impious system throw into the sphere of nature. In continuing the extract, I warn the reader that he will meet with a cold recitation of blasphemies against the God of Heaven. The writer says:—

“Next to Schleiermacher and Niebuhr, the greatest name in the literature of those days was Hegel. Disciples of the first combined the criticism of the second with the philosophy of the last, and the result was the Tübingen school. When Wolf published his *Prolegomena*, the reigning metaphysician of the day, Fichte, informed him that he had already arrived *a priori* at the same conclusions. In the same way it may be said that the critics supplied the means of maintaining a position which to Hegelians was a necessary truth. In Hegel’s system there is no personal God distinct from the universe, but a substance that realizes itself only in the mind of each individual man. There is, therefore, no personal immortal soul, no free will, and no providence. God is impersonal Reason, subsisting in mankind collectively. History is the process by which he manifests and develops Himself,—a process consequently reasonable, intelligible, consecutive, in which all things are connected by a chain of inevitable causation, in which they succeed each other naturally and necessarily, in which there is only one single agent. *In profane history this system of pantheism has promoted many brilliant researches by teaching men to seek the reason and connection of causes and effects, by insisting on the harmony of the parts, the reasonableness of the design, and the action of constant laws. But it explains only what lies in the sphere of nature, to the exclusion of the divine and of the human will. It denies the existence of supernatural causes, and the possibility of an interruption of the natural process.*”†

In the lines I have marked in italics we have the Reviewer’s estimate of the value which results from scientific pantheism. As a science atheistically pursued it would naturally have an attraction for him. In that science, history is but the wave and flow of that one and only deity whose development is in the intellect of mankind, the one abstract, impersonal, and absolute Reason. And whilst we are informed that “in pro-

\* Rambler, January 1861, p. 166.

† p. 167.



fane history this system has promoted many brilliant researches;" we are equally told that "it explains only what lies in the sphere of nature, to the exclusion of the divine and of the human will." We may therefore make a probable conjecture why this writer delights on all occasions to use the word *phenomena* for expressing the objects of nature. I by no means suppose him to be himself a pantheist, but he is certainly a disciple of Kant, and between the two systems there is but a step. Kant accepted the existence of external substance, but professed to find no theoretic proof of anything beyond appearances, except such force as the mind itself supplied. This acceptance of the pantheistic system in so far as it explains "what lies in the sphere of nature," as a process in which "all things are connected by a chain of inevitable causation, in which they succeed each other naturally, and *necessarily*, in which there is only one single agent," explains also why it was said that "physical science when it smashes any religious opinion, smashes it hopelessly and entirely, and the only resource of religion is to deny its former self." These arrows come from the same quiver. A necessary chain of evolution is of course irresistible. Let us see what further edification will result for us out of this union of critical methods with the Hegelian philosophy. The writer continues :

"The evangelical history possesses, therefore, no reality, and in part no meaning. The Resurrection is impossible, The mystery of Incarnation is but an expression of the idea that man is actually God; it is not a particular act, but the perpetual mode of God's existence. He did not once become man, but is eternally man. He did not once assume human shape, but He can assume no other. Christ is the unity of human and divine nature. The history of his life is therefore a fable, and the history of His religion is perfectly natural. These two ideas are the whole patrimony of the Tübingen school. They endeavour to prove them by the aid of the theory of myths, and of Hegel's theory of natural continuity. Hegel himself invited this combination when he said: 'As far as the historical, the external, the finite, are concerned, the sacred writings may be regarded in the same light as profane books;' and, 'When it is said that the first man acted thus, this is a mode of speaking to the senses. The first man signifies in reality man as man; not a particular accidental individual among many, but man according to the notion of man.'

"They proceed therefore as follows:—'In the natural sciences we consider only the operation of natural forces, and admit no interruption or suspension of them. An astronomer can reckon with the greatest certainty for ages beforehand, the date of an eclipse



or the appearance of a comet. A naturalist can with a fossil fragment construct an animal he has never seen or heard of. Why should history be exempt from laws which apply universally in other sciences?"\*

These are specimens of "metaphysics and morals which go a step further, and inquire whether the asserted revelations are or are not possible; whether they are in conformity with themselves, and with the fundamental principles of conscience and intelligence."† Of course I do not ascribe to the mind of the Reviewer what he is only transcribing; but how can he and his collaborators avoid the conclusion, that, if we grant to the pantheists what they affirm to be the nature and limits of the perceptions of their conscience and intellect, we cannot deny their right to reject both God and revelation, and to substitute their abstract reason, under whatever form conceived, in place of all existence? If we concede them the use of their fundamental principles and their scientific method, all that has been quoted above must be permitted to follow.

"In Hegel's system," as the Rambler observes, "there is no personal God distinct from the universe, but a substance that realizes itself in the mind of each individual man. God is impersonal reason subsisting in mankind collectively. History is the process by which He realizes and developes himself." To reduce the pompous inanities of the pantheist to their plain value, he professes to find no exit out of the abstractions of his own mind and the phenomena of his imagination into a universe that exists independent of them. Descartes laid the foundation of the modern system, and supplied its method, when, on the basis of philosophical doubt, he professed to reconstruct the fabric of truth anew upon the ground of his own personal thinking. Spinoza, nurtured on the Cabala in the Jewish schools, in which he found the germs of the pantheistic principle, developed his theory of the one universal substance by the aid of Descartes' subjective method. By investing the intelligence of man with ideal space and time as its universal forms, and by proclaiming it impossible philosophically to find a way out from his inward thought to an external and independent existence of the creation and its Creator, Kant prepared the way for the pantheistic school that succeeded him. His philosophy saw but a universe of phenomena, while his common sense held him back from the empty abyss into which his theories would have plunged him. Then came Fichte who embraced the

\* p. 167-8.

† Rambler, March 1862, p. 389.

inane void—literally embraced the phantom. His philosophy began from egotism, circled round the phenomena of his individual mind, and rested within the egotism from which it sprang. He assumed himself to be the creator of the universe, constructing the fabric out of his own mental abstractions, and clothing it with the phenomena of his memory and imagination. It was he who said to his pupils:—"Gentlemen, in our next lecture we shall proceed to create God." Schelling did not make himself like Fichte the source and fountain of existence, but he identified himself with whatever object his mind contemplated as truth. He was not himself the whole universe, but he proclaimed himself to be one and the same with the universe. Then arose this Hegel, attacked Schelling's theory, as Schelling had attacked Fichte's, and constructed his own. In his system, the universe is one absolute idea, or reason,—this is God, all is God. Man is the deity particularised, and he knows himself to be identical with the divinity, and this knowledge constitutes "revealed religion." Man in his self-consciousness, is God manifesting to Himself His own *being*, and this is represented as the one way in which God knows Himself. "The absolute idea or reason, is recognised most clearly in the self-consciousness of man, or the *Ego*. For the idea, in so far as it is to grow or thrive into an existence that is free, is naught else than the *Ego* or pure self-consciousness." In short, in the Hegelian system, the egotistic self-consciousness of man is, not solely God, but the only knowledge God has of His own being. "As a rigid consequence," observes Chalybäus, "of the Hegelian method, we find that the existence of a personal God is admitted neither within nor without the universe, but is reduced simply to the knowledge of the human being; that, furthermore, the hope of an individual continuance of the soul after death is scoffed at as a sensuously selfish illusion; and, finally, that the antagonism of good and evil is, in this way, indirectly suppressed, the latter being regarded as necessary, the former as relatively good,—according to times and circumstances—while both may relapse into each other."\*

I cannot pass on without a solemn reflection on this awful subject. Pantheism has its beginning and root in that self-reliance and egotistical presumption of intellect which ends in self-deification. It has stripped some of the greatest scholars of their Christian inheritance,—of a God, and of

\* See Historical Survey of Speculative Philosophy from Kant to Hegel by Chalybäus, translated by Tulk. Lecture XVII.

their own soul. It has reduced them to the level of the Brahmin and the Buddhist. It has left them vacant even of that spirit of reverence which is the long derived inheritance of their Oriental brethren. To the eyes of Catholic faith, and even to its philosophy, it exhibits a condition of man so maimed of perceptive power, so reduced in its provision of intellectual light, so feeble in comprehension of truth, that its prevalence can only be explained by some intellectual pride terrible enough to have seized the centre of the understanding, and overspread the entire conscience. The question has often been asked whether Lucifer, in abusing his great gifts, could have fancied himself equal to God. The pantheists have proved the practicability of that Satanic crime. What Lucifer had said in his heart, his Almighty Creator has repeated in the Book of Isaias :—“ *I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.....I will ascend above the clouds, I will be like to the Most High.*”\* Here is the *Ego*, the thinking self, rivalling God by force of self-consciousness, and assuming equality with Him through appropriating the gifts of the intellect unto the subjective self. The Satanic crime reveals itself anew in the Satanic temptation. “ *And the serpent said to the woman : No, you shall not die the death. For God doth know that in what day soever you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be open ; and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*” Now the fruit that was eaten was from the tree of forbidden knowledge. “ *Inflated,*” observes St. Chrysostom, “ *with the hope of equalizing herself with God, she formed certain great conceptions with herself.*”

There is an intense passion in certain ambitious souls to get at the secret of existence, and to penetrate beyond the light of truth into the very substance of God and of His creation ; frustrated in which forbidden thing, the aspirant descends into his own defeated mental powers ; and there abandoning the God who will not serve his ambitious presumption, and with that abandonment of God, losing the source of intellectual light, he strives with what gleams of light remain to construct a theory of the universe out of the thin abstractions of his mind ; and of that theory he makes himself the centre. The words of the Archangel to Tobias are as true of the godless and blinding lust of the intellect as of that of another kind :—“ *They who shut out God from themselves and from their mind, over them the devil hath power.*”† *By*

\* Isaias xiv. 14.

† Tobias vi. 17.



abstraction from God and introversion within self ; by breaking away from subjection to the Divine Author of all mental light ; by feeding and inflating the self-consciousness with whatever the mental eye may look upon ; by appropriating whatsoever the mind beholds, and making that recipient of light its fountain ; by so reversing the right method of procedure after truth as to make the rays of its light terminating obscurely in the soul the primal source from which the light of knowledge flows ; in short, by conceiving that he who thinks within himself is the originator of all his knowledge—the foundation of this intellectual crime is laid. I call it intellectual because it is enacted in the mind ; but the crime itself is in the apostacy of the will, and in the pride which shrinks not from self-deification. It is the intellectual Satanic crime.

These principles will help to explain that mysterious malady of the human soul, which, as history shews, has been so widely spread ; that dreamy night of the intelligence which has held human nature so deeply bound, but which human nature alone can hardly explain. When the egotism of intellectual pride has absorbed all knowledge into a man's self-consciousness as its cause, and self grows over all ; there arises a mental inebriation by which he is both dazzled and blinded, and whilst he thinks he has become the manifestation of an absolute truth, of divinity itself, he is ignorant that he is the victim of his imagination. He who long shuts out from his mind both God and the external world, and pursues trains of abstraction of which self is the central principle, has not succeeded in separating himself from that corruptible body which oppresses the soul musing on many things ; and then the imagination takes strange revenges. He may develop an ideal universe by a logic of which every link shall be in rigid sequence, and he may clothe that universe with all the beautiful colours of the creation, and yet it is but "the baseless fabric of a vision." For if he begins to reason on false assumptions, or on such as are true but inadequate, the more correctly he reasons the farther he will go wrong. All great errors, as Pascal justly observes, have sprung from too narrow a basis of truth. The youth born blind whom Dr. Cheselden couched, imagined, when he began to see, that his eyes, and the light, and the landscape on which he looked were all one indivisible thing. This is exactly the mental error of the pantheists, whose perception is of that infantile character that they confound the mental eye with the intellectual light, and with the objects that the light is given to illustrate. And so the conclusion comes that "God is im-



personal Reason subsisting in mankind collectively, and History the process by which He realizes and develops Himself."

Yet must it not be forgotten that this is all the result of that godless science so much commended by the Rambler and the Review. It is one thing for a man to assume that the fundamental principles of intelligence and conscience according to this order of science are those by which he may test revelation; and altogether another, for a man, before accepting a revelation, to try its consistency by the natural light of his intelligence, aided by the light of truth opening upon him and grace enabling him to believe.

Let us suppose a pantheist to have received the terrible command that was given to faithful Abraham. He would simply take it for a phenomenon arising in his mind, or springing from his conscience, to be resolved into a negative, and then transcendently rediscovered in an abstraction, whilst the phenomenal reminiscence will furnish material for a beautiful myth. Not only his theory of the universe, but his very method would reject the test of truth which has been common in all ages to the rational mind. He discards the old logical test of contradiction and puts into its place the principle of identity. Whatever he cannot harmonise with his own ideal he will deny, and deny, and continue to deny until the difference melts away and the residual notion blends into unity with his abstract universal reason.

In what that new, profound, and brilliant method consists, which is almost the only thing of which the Rambler and Review can speak with warmth, but which they never expound to our uninitiated minds, we are left to conjecture.

The Review tells us that by its means—"Investigations have become so impersonal, so free from prepossessions which distort truth, from predetermined aims and foregone conclusions, that their results can only be met by investigations in which the same methods are yet more completely and conscientiously applied."\* However highly the methods of the Tübingen school are extolled, it can scarcely be their pantheistic method that is held up as so new and so profound; for as regards its essence, it is very old. Its forms may be, and its language most certainly is, complicated enough to perplex the novice; but its distinctive conditions simply consist in being unable to see the independent subsistence of what is

\* Home and Foreign Review, October 1862, p. 514.

exterior to your own thought, and in confounding together what other men have the light to distinguish.

The Reviewer expressly says, that—"The Hegelian philosophy, not the critical method, is the great vice of the Tübingen school." He accepts its critical method but rejects the intellectual basis from which it springs. This mode of separating light from its fountain is rather a weakness with the Rambler. In reply to a question in D. N.'s Letter, N. N. accepts Mr. Buckle's method also without its basis. An introduction of the passage will help us to understand one item of the Rambler's method, and it is precisely the historical, or political, or what he loves to call the moral method. N. N. says:—

"The lesson taught by the physical sciences has borne valuable fruits in the moral. The application to history and politics of that method which inquires after the properties of things has been the source of the greatest modern discoveries. It has demolished the practice of treating history as a series of accidents, or as an arbitrary process, and the habit of dealing with abstractions and ignoring facts. *From the naturalist we have derived the notion of growth and development, and the notion that God manifests Himself in the regularity of His laws more than in their interruption.* If the materialists make no allowance for free-will, their adversaries formerly had no room for providence; and for this reason Mr. Buckle's method, though founded on a false hypothesis, is a move in the right direction. *In history the subject is not man, who is governed by free-will, but certain moral aggregates, nations, classes, states, cities, doctrines, whose existence is regulated by the laws of their nature.* It is in these things, in this historical or political physiology, that we discern the hand of God overruling the actions of men, whose freedom He does not restrain, otherwise we must write history, like biography, with men for its heroes, and can allow no divine action except in the shape of an *arbitrary interference*. If materialists confound design with fate, power with necessity, and *dream that that which is natural is implicitly not divine*, the reason is that they are materialists. Their method is incomplete, but it is necessary for those who would recognize the divine influence in the life of mankind.'\*"

The studying of men taken in masses, and of human opinions taken in their aggregates, was precisely what led Mr. Buckle to his materialistic views, and confirmed him in them. Statistics are valuable to the statesman and have their place in history, but they are not humanity. As generalizations they are necessarily abstractions, out of which individuals, whether

\* Rambler, May 1862, p. 530.

as leaders or originators, with all those personal qualities and influences which guide and change the masses, disappear. History has followed the inspiration of humanity in concentrating attention on its heroes. Who can explain the last eighteen centuries without the person of Christ, or the fourth century without Constantine, or the ninth without Charlemagne, or the age before him without Mahomet, or the last half century without Napoleon? The exposition of N. N. is almost too subtle to be easily taken hold of; but it looks, I only say it looks, like sliding Mr. Buckle's method from a materialistic to a pantheistic basis. The transfer of the "notion of growth and development" from physical to this moral science, the "notion that God manifests Himself in the regularity of His laws," more than in what is here called "arbitrary interference;" the exclusion of man's individual will as well as God's personal intervention from history; the finding in the nature and the laws of aggregates of men and of opinions, a "divine action" which is not the "arbitrary interference" of God; the rebuke addressed to the materialists who "dream that that which is natural is implicitly not divine;" and the final conclusion that Mr. Buckle's method "is necessary for those who would recognise the divine influence in the life of mankind," that influence being represented as consisting in a law of growth and development like that of physical nature;—all this looks very much like recognising the divine element in the historical evolution of general human nature, a human nature in which individual wills are of no account, and a species of history from which the personal intervention of God is withdrawn.

To return to the Article under consideration, its author makes a very just remark on the spirit of the Hegelian school of rationalists. He observes that:—

"The assertion that they, and they alone, are unprejudiced judges, is the great imposture of the new school of critics. They pretend that they enquire sincerely into the truth of a narrative *a posteriori*, which is in their eyes *a priori* incredible. They claim to be without any theological bias, and they begin by denying the truth of the religion whose history they are studying. Assuming therefore the principle that the foundation of Christianity is a perfectly natural and intelligible process, they necessarily rejected as fabulous a large portion of the life of Christ, His miraculous birth, His resurrection, and ascension, all the miracles for which no plausible natural interpretation can be found, and most of the discourses recorded in St. John."\*



Nothing can be more solid than this observation, yet nothing more inconsistent with the theory of a godless pursuit of knowledge, and with the asserted right of physical science to smash religious opinions. The writer proceeds :—

“It is therefore admitted, that much of the gospel is not literally true. This Strauss endeavoured to make more probable, independently of the argument against miracles, by the ingenious use of the discrepancy between St. John and the other Evangelists, and of the imperfect agreement of these among themselves. This, the attack on the old Gospel harmonies, is the most brilliant part of his book ; and it cannot be said that the explanations that used to be given can be admitted in the presence of his skilful argument. But this was only the first, the destructive, part of his work. If the Gospels relate things which are not true, how did these things come to be believed ? If these stories are not historical, how did they arise ? This answer was borrowed from Niebuhr : the Gospel history is full of myths,” &c.

After the exposition of Strauss comes that of Baur. The reader is taught how he rejected several books of the New Testament, and concluded from his theory of myths that “the books of the New Testament must have arisen very gradually, some of them late in the second century.” Christianity is represented as only the final development and the reassumption of the moral philosophy of pagan Greece and Rome brought into union with Jewish ideas and anticipations.

“Its formation was the result of a process extending from the period of Socrates to the composition of the Gospel of St. John. The notion of the person of Christ, a subordinate element in the system, came from the Jews. It was simply assumed that the Messiah had appeared, the fulfilment of the prophecies was referred to Him, and the rich treasures of Hellenic speculation supplied the substance of his teaching. In the Gospel of St. Matthew, the person has less importance than the doctrine, and the doctrine reduces itself to very little. It consists, in fact, of no more than the Sermon on the Mount, and the substance of the sermon are the beatitudes ; and the only characteristic and original idea is the beatitude of the poor.”\*

His grounds for maintaining that St. Peter and St. Paul were leaders of distinct sects are similarly given : and why the critic concludes that “St. Paul’s martyrdom had a conciliatory effect, which is expressed in the legend which united the two apostles in their last labours and their death.”



Then "the Gospel of St. Luke was written in the interest of St. Paul, that of St. Matthew about the year 140, in the Jewish interest."

"The definitive reconciliation and oblivion of the past is expressed in the Acts of the Apostles, which suppress the conflict altogether. The highest product of the union are the Epistles and Gospel of St. John, written at the time of the Paschal controversy, in which the Jewish doctrine of the Messiah is developed with the aid of Greek speculation, and under the influence of Philo to the notion of the Logos; and the religion of charity signifies the filial harmony of all parties. In this manner the Catholic Church took its rise towards the close of the second century."\*

The only reply given to all this error is a clever remark of one of Baur's colleagues.—"Professor Baur," he said, "applies to the history of the Apostolic age the experience of his university life. St. Peter is a venerable professor, whose dignity and importance are attacked by an emancipated student; and St. Paul is the ambitious and restless competitor, who tries to take the seat of his old master."

Now the most grievous offence in all this writing is the imperturbable coolness and tone of absolute indifference with which a Catholic periodical puts forth blasphemy after blasphemy against Almighty God, against our Blessed Lord and Saviour, against His holy Apostles, and against the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures. If this be that new method "so impersonal, so colourless, so free from prepossessions," may the grace and mercy of our Lord keep us free from it. Let not the spirit of my comments be misunderstood. Far am I from objecting to the bringing out of infidel theories in their due time and place for the express object of then and there refuting them with all the force of proof and argument. But here are a number of pages devoted exclusively to the exposition of the worst infidel systems of the age, supported by a sketch of their arguments, and without the addition of any refutation whatsoever.

No antidote is given beyond one or two passing remarks of a general character, and a reference at the conclusion to Dr. Döllinger's work, a work but recently published, a history, not a professed reply, and still confined to the German language. To this German work is the English reader referred for a remedy against the impious theories that have been so gratuitously put into his mind. It is obvious to the commonest sense, that if those theories were to be put for-

ward as the hostile systems to which Dr. Döllinger's book furnishes the reply, the substance of that reply should have been given to the reader. Nor should more have been adduced of the infidel arguments than could be supplied with due refutation. This was imperative, inasmuch as the Reviewer had accepted the critical methods of those infidels, had strongly praised their depth and brilliancy, had even intimated that—"The German intellect can boast of no greater achievement than the creation of the critical and reconstructive methods, of which the school of Baur represents the highest development;"\* and had given it as his opinion that—"They have been victorious in many an encounter with inferior adversaries, and the names of those by whom unsuccessful refutations have been attempted are to be found among Catholics as well."†

The Reviewer makes a remark which condemns his entire proceeding, when he says:—"There are those who estimate the danger and importance of a theory in inverse ratio to the enormity of the conclusions to which it leads. Where there is much that is apparently fanciful and absurd, they will suppose that there can be little to try faith. This would be a very erroneous view of the real significance of the criticism of the school of Tübingen." It is on this and similar grounds that I solemnly denounce this method of filling the minds of Catholic or of Protestant readers of all sorts and dispositions with the unrefuted theories of the German infidels.

It is currently said that the Home and Foreign Review exhibits a less uncatholic tone than its predecessor. True it is, and so far commendable, that the Review takes up religious subjects less frequently; but where it does handle religion, the old spirit is manifested with as much of the rationalistic virus as heretofore. I have already alluded to an article in the Number for last October, in which speculations are put forth respecting the primitive man and his religion, and the historic development of religion itself after the primitive age, which make it one of the most uncatholic and offensive that has appeared. And what deprives this production of all excuse is, that the book under review affords not the slightest support to the conclusions which the Review has adopted and put into circulation.

The writer professes to trace the progress of the primitive Gentilism through Judaism to Christianity in what concerns

“the name and definition of God, in the doctrine of the seven demiurgic forces, and the doctrine of sacrifice.” Here then we again meet with the primitive man, whom the Reviewer represents as a rude being, having no name for God, and no knowledge of his Creator beyond such vestiges of His will and power as are traceable in the elements of the world, with no spiritual ideas, and with none but a sensuous language in its first rudiments eked out by signs and gestures. Limiting my own remarks as much as possible, I shall quote the passages in which these doctrines are set forth, marking in *italics* the sentences to which I direct especial attention. Speaking of the periods of the primitive religion and of the patriarchal faith, the Reviewer says :—

“Of these two periods we have only fragmentary knowledge. Their history has to be reconstructed out of the religions of the Confusion, compared with the documents of Genesis. *The idea of their religion was the worship of the Creator, manifesting Himself in the great works of the physical universe.* The reform which Moses was commissioned to introduce into this primeval system was only a partial one; he weakened, but did not destroy, *the physical and material aspect of religion.* Judaism was a step in the religious development of mankind, but not the term of that development. One of its chief designs was to give a moral tendency to the elemental and material religion of primitive man. . . . Judaism was thus a transitional system, containing both the husk of the old, and the germ of the new order. When the seed suddenly grew up into Christianity, the old husk was broken to pieces and completely cast off, the last remains of the elemental precepts were cancelled, *and religion became entirely moral and metaphysical, without retaining a single fibre of physical speculation among its essential constituents.*”\*

And yet this was the religion of the Incarnation. The Christian religion is represented as “entirely moral and metaphysical,” and is without a “single fibre” of what is contemplated as physical among “its essential constituents.” The other passages I have marked would be less noticeable, and might indeed bear a sound sense, but for the speculations that follow.

After defining man as “a self-conscious spontaneous force,” and observing that “he feels himself to be a spirit, but has no way of expressing his spiritual consciousness except in the terms of his sensations,” and after remarking that, “considered in themselves, the signs must be all taken from the material world,” he says :—

\* Home and Foreign Review, October 1862, p. 452.



“Thus not only was the creation that great gift which called for all the gratitude of the newly-created man, *but the created world was the only possible object of direct contemplation to him; neither his language nor his philosophy as yet enabled him to fix his thoughts and discourse upon abstract and metaphysical verities.* The immaterial spheres of God and the soul are only known to us through their products and acts; we cannot behold their substance. Indeed no forces are known to us except through their effects. As the changes of visible things reveal to us the laws and forces of matter, so do the existence of the world, its greatness, its use, and its beauty, reveal to us the footprints of the forces or attributes of God—His power, wisdom, goodness, and beauty.”\*

Christianity was represented to be “entirely moral and metaphysical,” whilst the newly-created man is put before us as not enabled “to fix his thoughts on abstract and metaphysical verities.” The question under consideration is, how far did the primitive man know his Creator? Had he any name by which to express the God who made him? The Reviewer solves the question in the following language:—

“The things perceived by the senses are the common property of mankind, and may easily, and without risk of error, be expressed by words that all can understand. But the inner self-consciousness is an individual thing, a private and inalienable possession. A man may suspect that his neighbour feels the same feelings, and thinks the same thoughts, as himself. But it is not an easy thing at once to coin words to express these thoughts, and, after they are coined, to be sure that the person addressed should understand them in the sense meant by the speaker. Hence in the documents of the primeval religion it was easy enough to speak of the world, and the things in it; *but when from these men passed on to the soul or to God, then came the knot.* God might be called Spirit: but spirit is wind or breath; and *when the primitive prophet says that ‘the Spirit moved on the waters,’* who could tell whether he meant that God so moved, or that a wind blew over them? Again, if we call God ‘Heaven,’ who knows whether in the expression ‘Heaven forbid,’ we express our belief in a controlling power of the stars and of the heavenly spheres, such as the Sabæans held, or whether we attribute this power to the immaterial God? If, again, like the earliest Hebrews, we only call God Elohim, ‘the princes or lords,’ who can tell that the word implies any thing more than the great and mighty masses that are apparent to the senses, and whose force overcomes the weakness of men,—the sun, the earth, the sea, the rivers, the mountains, the trees, even the very beasts?”†

The Reviewer assumes two points in this argument, and

treats them as if they were settled beyond question. First, that God neither taught the primitive man the use of language, nor inspired him with the gift. Secondly, that the early portions of the book of Genesis consist of documents of a much earlier date than Moses. He ascribes the history of creation to a primitive prophet.

Assuming the first chapter of Genesis to be such a fragment, it proves the primitive prophet to have been in possession of a language completely formed and of highly concentrated power. With respect to the sense attached by the primitive man to the word *ruah*, or spirit, it is obvious that if we can attach a number of widely different senses to this word, some expressive of spiritual, others of sensible things, and yet can keep those senses perfectly distinct; it was quite possible for the primitive man to have employed it in at least two of those senses, without any confusion in its usage. The writer conducts his argument in seeming utter oblivion of any primitive revelation by which God made Himself directly known to man. How could that primitive prophet or his contemporaries have confounded Elohim with the physical forces of the world, and have made them his princes or lords? At the very first sentence of the narrative we have *bara Elohim*, a mysterious plural, though we may grant it to be but augmentative, as the nominative to the singular act of creation which brought forth those physical forces into existence. If Elohim was taken for those physical forces of the world, then the prophet must have meant to say—In the beginning, the physical forces created the physical forces. But as the Reviewer could not have meant anything so absurd; I can only suspect, from his subsequent philosophising on the seven demiurges, that there is some implied allusion to a primitive belief in those seven spirits, identified with the seven days, as the creative forces of the world. It is difficult to reconcile the awe inspired into primitive man by the mighty masses of material creation, to the extent of confounding them with his Creator and calling them his lords, with the philosophic principles as to the nature of such external influence, put forth in the previous page. There it is said that,—“The notions of power, wisdom, and goodness are not an influx of the world into the mind, but a meaning which the mind lends to the world. It is not sensation, but an internal act of our own self-consciousness, that gives us the essential part of our notions of causation, intention, contrivance, purpose, and will.” If, according to this philosophy, the notions of power, purpose, and will, are so entirely subjective and the product of

self-consciousness, how came the primitive man to find in the material creation a power and a purpose more mighty than he found in himself, even to the extent of calling those greater elements his Elohim, his princes or lords, and viewing in them the only God with which he was acquainted ?

The question next discussed by the writer is how the primitive man, in the progress of his subsequent knowledge, passed "from the world and the things in it,...to the soul or to God?" this question he solves as follows :—

"In the primeval religion, the knot appears to have been cut, *by giving to God first no name at all*, and then a name that was entirely unintelligible, and by forbidding all enquiries into its meaning. This state of religion lasted from the time of Enos, the third from Adam, who was the first to call on the name of the Lord (Gen. iv. 26.) till the time of Moses. God had made Himself known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as the Almighty God, El Shaddai; but by His name Jehova He was not known to them—that is to say, says Dr. Döllinger, 'the meaning of this name was not disclosed to them.' They had the name, for it is frequently used in the opening chapters of Genesis, after the first. But it was a name that they were forbidden to pronounce."\*

We are told that from Adam to Enos the knot was solved by giving no name to God at all. And that from Enos to Moses a name was given that was entirely unintelligible, and into the meaning of which it was forbidden to enquire. Now the proof is constructed in this way, the first chapter of Genesis is assumed to be the document of a "primitive prophet;" for three pages further the reviewer affirms that "the first chapter of Genesis may be taken as the most perfect expression of the primitive creed," and he proceeds to expound the creed from it. This creed we shall consider later, but he remarks that the name of Jehova, though not used in the first chapter, "is frequently used in the opening chapters of Genesis, *after the first*." He argues that Enos first used the name, because, as mentioned in the fourth chapter, Enos first began to call upon the name of Jehova. He adds that it was a name which it was forbidden to pronounce. But if it was forbidden to be pronounced, how could Enos have called upon that name? The prophets constantly used it in their prophetic speeches, nor is there any proof in Scripture that the use of it was forbidden by divine authority. The substituting of another name for God in place of the most sacred name seems to have



been of Rabbinical introduction. How indeed could the name have been handed down if its use was forbidden? That name was so far intelligible, that being incomprehensible it designated Him who was incomprehensible. Yet as it is formed from the elements of one of the most commonly used primitive verbs, it could not fail to suggest some general idea to the mind. The real question is, whether it was revealed before the time of Moses, and whether he did or did not first introduce it into the primitive history. The Reviewer omits giving Dr. Döllinger's opinion that—"The two principal names of God, Elohim and Jehova, are primeval ones, and did not reach the Hebrews from without, appearing at the cradle of the people, so to speak."\* The common opinion respecting Enos is, not that he first used the name of God, but that he first held assemblies for public worship, in which the name of the Lord was called upon. If the use of the name El Shaddai is first recorded of the patriarchs, it does not follow that it was first used in their time. The conclusion which the Reviewer draws from his argument is expressed in these words:—

"Hence we may gather that the namelessness of God is one characteristic of the primitive religion. And this conclusion is drawn not only from the history of the Heathen sects, which are the ruins of this primitive religion, but from the very nature of things. In the infancy of language God could not be named by any name expressive of His essence, without direct danger of confounding Him with creatures. In Paganism this tendency became a fact. And the line of demarcation between God and creatures was gradually blotted out."†

This is a marvellous way of expounding the Book of Genesis. Had the facts of that Book been denied by the Reviewer, it might have been intelligible; but the argument professes to be based upon the facts as there recorded. Yet what we chiefly read of the primitive man in Genesis is the direct communion which God has with him. How God created Adam in His own image and likeness, how He gave Eve to him as a help-mate, and how He married them, how He gave them a command, and how He brought every beast and bird to Adam to see how he would call them. And there is that awful history, how God came to them after the fall, and how He dealt with them. And yet we are told that from the very nature of things the mind of Adam and of his children was so deficient, and their language so rude and unformed, that they had no

name for God, no direct contemplation of Him, and only a nature worship through the elements of the physical world. Inconsistent as it is with the Scriptures, this statement will yet be found to cohere with the theory put forth in the articles on Original Sin.

Before coming to the exposition of such religion as the writer assigns to the primitive man, I cannot resist taking some notice of a quotation by which he strives to exemplify the early heathen tendencies through which "Creation became identified with pro-creation, mind with matter." He says :—

"Thus where Moses says simply, 'In the beginning (bereshith) God created (bara) the heaven and the earth,' Sanchoniatho lets us know of a sect half heathen, half Jewish, that dwelt about Byblus, whose version of these words was—There was one Eliun (Elohim, God) called Hypsistos (the most high), and his wife Beruth (bereshith); from them came Uranus (heaven), and his sister called Ge (earth); and from these in turn the primitive gods El, Chronos, and the rest. Thus, in Heathenism, the developments of nature become the developments of God, and cosmogony becomes theogony, because the Cosmos, or world, is the only Theos, or God."\*

The object of this quotation is to prove the early tendency of heathenism to confound God with nature. Sanchoniatho is supposed to have lived soon after Moses. Except some fragments of this author preserved by Eusebius, and a few allusions in Theodoret, all quoted from Porphyry, who professes to quote them in his turn from the translation of Philo Byblus, made about the time of Christ, the work has perished. There is a preliminary question whether Sanchoniatho ever lived, which some of the most celebrated critics decide in the negative. Allowing, as is probable, that Sanchoniatho both lived and produced his work at an early period, the next difficulty is the extent of Philo's interpolations, which all scholars admit to have been considerable.

It is obvious that at the epoch assigned to Sanchoniatho, there could have been no sect on the Phœnician coast, half Greek, half Jewish; and the passage bears the strongest evidence of having been penned some time after the Seleucides had diffused Greek ideas in that region of the world. There is not a word in Eusebius that justifies the writer in saying that Sanchoniatho lets us know of a sect half heathen, half Jewish, nor is the passage rendered in such a way as fairly

to represent the original. In the midst of a long and ridiculous list of Phœnician Gods, having come down to the posterity of Misor and Sydyc, whom he identifies with Hermes and the Dioscuri respectively, Sanchoniatho says :—

“About this time is born one Eliun, called Hypsistus (the most High), and his wife called Beruth. These dwelt in the neighbourhood of Byblus, and from them was born Epygeus or Autocthon whom they afterwards called Uranus (heaven); thus, from him, giving the name Uranus to the element over us, on account of its exceeding beauty. This Uranus had also a sister, born from the same parents, who was called Ge (or earth) and from her too on account of her beauty they called the earth by the same name. But their father, Hypsistus, having died in some conflict with wild beasts, was deified, to whom his children offered libations and sacrifices.”\*

Eliun associated with the root El is obviously a generic name for lord or God; Beruth, if we are to give it a Scripture origin, means covenant; and the Lord and his Covenant would be a more likely association to linger amongst heathenized Jews than the deification of the term “bereshith;” but the allusion is obviously local, and Beruth is identifiable with Beiruth, by which name the ancient city of Berytus is still called, and for which, as the locality of Eliun, Philo has substituted his native, but more modern city, of Byblus. In short the myth has no connection with the beginning of Genesis.

To return to the writer’s speculations on the first chapter of Genesis, as exhibiting the primitive creed of man, the work of a primitive prophet, he says:—

“The smaller the space occupied in the primitive religion by speculation on God’s nature; the greater was the range of the contemplation of His works. The first chapter of Genesis, which may be taken as the most perfect expression of the primitive creed, is entirely occupied with them. The Elohim in the beginning creates heaven and earth, the invisible and the visible worlds; but the earth, the visible universe, *becomes* a dead chaos of dark waters; then the spirit of God begins to move on these waters, and to *renew* the face of the earth. Six great *phases of development* stand forth, all *growing* from darkness into light, from nothingness into being. These are called days, and they are made up of *two elements*, called morning and evening, or *conception and birth*. The first of these is called the one day, because all the others are, as it were *branches* from it. After these *six days of development* comes a seventh of rest, when *the productivity* of the forces of the universe ceases, and God alone is exalted.”†

\* Eusebius, Præp : Evang : I. cap. 10. p. 36. Ed. 1623.

† p. 457.



The productivity of the forces of the universe ceases on the seventh day, and God alone is exalted. The forces of the universe, the Elohim, whether the demiurges or the material powers self-developing, whichever of the two we choose to select from the writer's suggestions, take their rest, and God alone is exalted. Now the Scripture records six successive epochs of creation, and it says—"God made the firmament... God made the two great lights... God created the great whales... God made the beasts of the earth... and God said, let us make man to our own image and likeness." The living creatures were no doubt like the body of Adam, fashioned from the previously created elements, but their organization and life were new creations. The Scripture says nothing that implies six days of development after which the productivity of the forces of the universe ceases, and God alone is exalted; but it says—"On the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had done." In the writer's exposition of the first chapter of Genesis, assumed for "the most perfect expression of the primitive creed," there is nothing which Hegel might not have penned without violation to his theory. Not only does the doctrine breathe a pantheistic odour; but between the first creative act and the chaos of unformed elements directly resulting from that act, the writer has contrived to insert an epoch in which the dragons occupied the earth. He says a few pages further on—"In Genesis, after the creation of heaven and earth has been briefly mentioned, we read that 'the earth *became* a chaos, and darkness upon the faces of an abyss;' but we are told nothing about the cause of the catastrophe that had overwhelmed the newly created earth." And sundry passages are adduced from the Psalms and Job, where God is represented as destroying the dragons in the waters, as proof that God destroyed the fiends of a pre-chaotic epoch, and then reduced the earth to that chaos which is recorded in the second verse of the Bible. He says—"God is always represented as having formed the world out of a waste of earth or waters, which was occupied by dragons, or evil spirits, who were slain and cast out by the beams of the new created light."\*

If this be intended to explain the remains of the Saurian and other gigantic reptiles, we are left to conclude that they are the bodies of the fallen angels. But the descrip-

tion of the work of the fifth day or epoch in Genesis is adequate to explain the production of those monsters, without violating the literal sense of Scripture or raising up other insurmountable difficulties in its exposition. The Scripture says—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. *And the earth was without form and void; and darkness upon the face of the abyss.*" The Hebrew establishes the strictest connection between the one creative act "*in the beginning,*" and all the subsequent terms of the sentence.

Next the Reviewer proceeds to identify the "seven primeval angels" or demiurges, with the days of creation, and as exhibiting a pagan corruption of a tradition. This is all very well; but we are informed that "the largest part of the religious ceremonial of the Jews was based upon this cosmical doctrine,"\* and are told that:—

"In this matter, the great reform introduced by Judaism was the neglect of the six demiurgic forces, and the concentration of religious regards upon that day whose history was a complete void, and which thus symbolised the rest of God. Other religions paid greater honour to the powers of the other days,—the mundane deities, whose service consisted in doing honour to the material elements over which they presided...There are traces in history of the anger which this excited among the heathen against the 'sabbatising' Hebrews; and this, perhaps, is the cause why the originally beneficent God, to whom the Sabbath, or seventh day, was dedicated by Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans,—Seb, Chronos, Saturn,—came to inherit his evil reputation as the savage destroyer of his brothers and children. Thus the Sabbath was the first step towards the destruction of the cultus of the elements, which, according to St. Paul, was perfected in Christianity."†

The identification of Saturn with the Jewish Sabbath is curious to say the least, and the origin of that identification yet more so, dating, as we must suppose it, after the Exodus. In support of this cosmical view St. Paul is quoted as saying that—"The law was the service of the elements of the universe." And after interpreting the great vision of the Apocalypse as exhibiting the transition from the worship of the Creator in the Jewish rite into that of the Redeemer in the Christian, the object of which was "to teach men to contemplate God in His relations not so much to nature as to man," and "to withdraw men's eyes from the material world, and to fix them upon the soul," the writer says of the Chris-

\* p. 458.

† p. 462.

tian religion,—“This change, by which religion, once for all, got rid of the crude speculations of an astrological and magical system of physics, was not approved by the mystical sects of Judaism and Heathenism.”\*

Remarks of this character prepare the way for the development of the doctrine of sacrifice. I will put the writer's principles together, omitting his exposition of them for the sake of brevity:—

“To the Hebrew mind there were always two parts of a new creation. First, the destruction of the enemies or opposing powers; and then the building up of the new order of things. These two parts of the act were connected, not merely as antecedent and consequent, *but as cause and effect. The destruction of the fiends in chaos by the newly created light was ipso facto the renewal of the earth*, the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea was the creation of Israel as a people.....

“Thus every creative act of God, after the first creation of heaven and earth, is a renewal through destruction.”.....

“Thus in the Jewish ritual sacrifice might have reference to that element of destruction which is found in all creation after the first; and this reference, which is only secondary in Judaism, becomes of primary consequence in the heathen systems.”.....

“The Hebrew tradition, till we come to the Evangelical predictions of the suffering Messias, contains nothing similar to this physical suffering of a deity in the restoration of the world. But *the destruction necessary for the destined renewal is often said to be a cause of moral suffering to God*. Before the deluge ‘He repented that He had made man, and it grieved Him to the heart.’ If this looks like the grief of hatred and aversion, other passages represent it as the agony of a love yearning to save, yet obliged to destroy.”

“An aboriginal element of the idea of sacrifice was the doctrine of substitution. *Not only was the original destruction of the dragons of chaos, or the original self-mutilation of the demiurge, necessary for the making of the world, but the continued representation of these original sacrifices was necessary for its preservation.*

“With regard to substitution, Judaism introduced great reforms into the doctrine of sacrifice. Sacrifice was either the destruction of the sinner who held the world in thrall, or the self-immolation of the voluntary victim dying to give life to man.....Every capital punishment among the Jews was a human sacrifice, as when Samuel hewed Agag to pieces ‘before the Lord.’ But the Jewish law absolutely forbade the substitution of one man for another; each man had to bear his own iniquity,—‘the soul that sinneth, it shall die.’ The only human sacrifice it permitted was the death of the sinner for his own sin. And, on the other hand, the self-immo-



lation of the Divine Victim was kept in the background, obscurely commemorated in history by the interrupted sacrifice of Isaac, but not so directly represented by any of the ordinary sacrifices of the ritual as to be intelligible to the witnesses of it."

"Part of the Mosaic reform was to change the significance of sacrifice,—to give it a moral *instead of a physical meaning*, a spiritual *instead of a cosmical influence*."

"Thus the doctrine of a Divine sacrifice would rise up again, but founded now only on moral considerations, not on physical or cosmogonical myths. In this way the religion of satisfaction and penance gradually grows up, through the developments and suppressions introduced by Judaism, out of the primitive religion of creation and cosmogony."

"In these three instances the law of Moses is exhibited as a schoolmaster to prepare the primeval gentilism for Christianity. In the first instance we see *the concrete, sensuous feeling of God*, gradually developed into an abstract form, into an idea which would have been as unintelligible to the first men as the abstract words of German or English are to a modern Papuan.....Judaism, and later heathenism, brought the rudimentary notions of the primitive religious feeling into distinct consciousness; Judaism developed them in one way, Heathenism in another; and the event has decided on their respective merits."

"In the second instance we see Judaism gradually putting off the shell of the *material, elemental cultus*, which, *in the absence of any abstract idea of God*, was necessarily the religious ceremonial of the *primeval religion*, and thus preparing the way for Christianity, which suppressed the last vestiges of this 'service of the beggarly elements.'"

"In the third instance, we see the Christian idea of sacrifice gradually developed through Judaism, from a means of expiating a destructive ceremonial defilement *and of maintaining the universe in its normal course*, to the full moral significance of the Christian redemption."\*

Such is the Review's exposition of the primitive religion of man, and of the process by which that religion was developed into Christianity. When we are told that Adam and his children had no direct knowledge of God, either as their Creator or as a self-existing being, spiritual in nature and independent of his work; when we find the primitive man represented as having but the first rudiments of speech, and as devoid even of the mental capability that suffices for conceiving an abstract idea; we naturally recall the doctrine of the articles of the Rambler on original sin, where Adam is represented as little more than an animal by nature, with its

\* From p. 459 to 469.

savage and selfish interests. Only we here miss that glimpse of a primitive revelation to him which we were there vouchsafed for a moment. The writer has assumed at the outset that the first chapter of Genesis is the most perfect representation of primitive religion, and the work of a primitive prophet; that religion had a sacrifice indeed bearing reference to the destructive powers of the universe and to the cosmical preservation of the world; but in that religion the Lamb that was slain from the beginning of the world is not heard of. The history of the fall and of the promised Redeemer of man appears not until the second chapter of the Divine Book. Of serpents and dragons we hear enough before chaos began to exist, but of Him who was to crush the serpent's head we hear absolutely nothing. What was an assumption at the beginning of the article is considered at its conclusion as proved, where its author says—"From these instances, which might be greatly multiplied, we may discover that *the first chapter of Genesis is the creed of the primitive patriarchal religion*, not without reference to the heresies by which that religion was surrounded." Whence we must conclude either that Adam and his children were surrounded with heresies, or that this first chapter contained the creed of later times, or that there were other races which sprang not from Adam. All that we, my Rev. Brethren, can say is, that if this be the new method of interpreting Scripture, it is rationalistic, not Catholic; that it neither does justice to primitive man nor to God; that it neither represents the primitive, nor the Jewish, nor the Catholic faith.

An attempt to explain the principles of religion with the aid of an incongruous philosophy has at all times proved the source of the gravest errors. Such a philosophy I have found in the Rambler, and I see it revived in the Review. It is set forth in the three articles on the "Forms of Intuition,"\* and will be found to underlie many of those articles which impinge on the principles of Catholic teaching. A complete revision of the methods which this periodical has pursued with respect to religious questions would demand the careful examination of this philosophy; this I intended to have given, but the space left me allows but a brief notice of its fundamental position. It has almost grown into a proverb, that, when the Catholic philosopher abandons his catechism he is sure to fall into absurdities. The philosopher of the Rambler has done a stranger thing, for he has essayed to

\* Rambler of November, 1859, January 1860, and March 1860.

unite the principles of the catechism with the philosophy of Emmanuel Kant. He has attempted to make the philosophy of Kant Christian, and to make the philosophy of the catechism Kantian.

Kant reduced the fundamental principles of the understanding, which he called the forms of intuitive perception, to space and time. These are represented as the two universal and necessary forms of all thought, coming not from experience but derived from the mind itself,—the intelligible forms of whatever can be known, the paternity of which forms belongs to the subjective mind.

“Kant,” says the Rambler, “looks at them not as ideas, but as forms of the mind itself, they are laws of the mechanism of the intellect. Of these aboriginal forms of the mind, he only enumerates two—space and time.....Space and time, no doubt, are such forms; that we apprehend objects as existing in space is not a consequence, but a condition, of experience; it is the result of a peculiar constitution or preformation of our minds, which would exist whether we ever had experience or no.”\*

Again it is said:—

“This fundamental notion of space is a form of the perceptive power, a condition of perception; something originally inherent in the mind perceiving, and not derived from the objects perceived. ....And if space is such a form, so also is time. Time is not a notion gained from experience; for the perceptions of experience can only be perceived in succession, and succession presupposes time.”†

In this philosophy space and time hold that relation to our intelligence, which St. Thomas following the Fathers ascribes to the light of intelligence, that created reflection of the light of universal being which is implanted in the mind at its creation, and which is the luminous source of first principles, as well as the illuminator and test of all experimental truth. This light of intelligence, or *intellectus agens*, illuminating the *intellectus possibilis*, or subjective, recipient mind, Dante, resuming the philosophy of the schools, calls “the intellectual good.” This implanted gift, connatural with the mind, is to the percipient mind, or eye of the mind, what the solar light is to our corporal eyes; it is in the mind as light is in the eye, of an objective, not of a subjective character, enabling the subjective or recipient intellect, (*intellectus possibilis*) to look upon the prospect of truth. In place of this light of intellect, this *esse ideale*, Kant substitutes space and

\* November, 1859, p. 19.

† p. 20.



time as subjective forms of the mind, and first principles of all knowledge, which, derived from within the mind itself, unite themselves with all experience derived through the senses, and render that experience intelligible. In short, in this system, the universe presents but phenomena or appearances, which the mind, by reason of its inherent forms of space and time, informs with universality, and transforms into general ideas, or objects of thought.

Now turn, unshape, attenuate, generalize, abstract, drop all divisions of space, all successions of time, as we will, it is impossible to make these two forms the principles of all our knowledge. Absolute space must be infinitude of extension, and absolute time, devoid of succession, must be eternity. And if the mind be subjectively clothed or conditioned with infinite and eternal forms, the mind itself must be infinite and eternal. If they be aboriginal forms of the mind and laws of its mechanism, not only conditions of perception, but forms originally inherent in the subjective mind perceiving, it will be impossible to avoid the conclusion that the mind itself, clothed with these two attributes, is an infinite and eternal being. And as the mind itself claims the paternity of these two exclusive principles of all knowledge, it necessarily follows that the thinking mind is the original fountain from which all knowledge proceeds. In this system, the universe exterior to the mind is reduced to appearances, and the mind itself gives to that universe its order, connection, and subsistence. Jacobi justly reproached Kant with having, on the one hand, undermined the experience of the senses, and caused it to evaporate into bare appearances, whilst, on the other, he silently rested on that experience for his support. If all things derive their subsistence in space and time from the thinking faculty of the individual man; then, independently of human thought, they subsist not in space and time at all. Here we have the basis of the egotistic, pantheistic philosophy which constitutes man with his human thought the ordainer of the universe.

The writer of these essays on the "Forms of Intuition" accepts the two subjective mental forms of space and time from Kant, but conceiving them inadequate of themselves to explain all the principles of human knowledge, he goes in search of other forms, and finds them in the three powers of the soul, which we are taught in the catechism. He says :

\* The difficulty is, that whereas all *a priori* thought requires a mental action, the forms of space and time are perfectly passive.

They are rather attributes of the passive *sensorium* than productive forces of the *intellectus agens*. They are like white sheets hung up in the mind's workshop, whereon phenomena and events paint their pictures, to be hung up in the galleries of perception and memory. They behave themselves as passive in our contemplation; they do not co-operate while we drink in all the sensations that flicker on their surfaces. And then all these sensations that come and go are merely phenomenal and contingent; they make no advance towards the necessary and universal: *we see what seems, we do not yet know what is and what must be*. To know this, we require an activity which does not belong to space or time—to space, *the passive receptacle in which, or on whose surface, extended objects are presented to us; to time, the thread on which the beads of our successive sensations are strung by the memory.*"\*

And the result of his search is thus expressed :

"The personality is the soul; and the old transcendental analysis of the soul makes it consist of three powers—force, reason, and will—*posse, scire, velle*. These three powers are the supplementary forms of intuition of which we were in search."†

And after observing that "the concurrence of these three are requisite even for a mathematical demonstration," and that "the real category, condition, or form of motion is force," whether the motion be purely mental or external, and that "cause cannot be thought of except in the form and under the condition of force;" the writer comes to his point, and this point demands especial attention. He says :—

"Further, as the objects of sensation are judged not to be mere empty appearances, but substances and forces, and by their order, skill, beauty and use, to be manifestations of reason, design and intention; while, on the other hand, *the senses, our sole windows of external experience, cannot report anything about substance, force, reason or intention,—it is clear that these ideas come from within, not from without; belong not to the matter, BUT TO THE FORM OF OUR THOUGHTS; and are given, not by our perceptive organs receiving the emanations of external objects, BUT BY THE FORMATIVE FORCES OF THE MIND*. Hence there is even more reason to call force, understanding and will, *forms of the faculties*, than to give that name to space and time."‡

Again he says :

"The personal forms are the mechanism of our minds, that begins to work as spontaneously as the stomach. Force, understanding, and will, are preformations of mind, conditions of our faculties, the

\* p. 23.

+ p. 37.

‡ p. 38.

consciousness of which is no more a necessary preliminary to thought, than the consciousness of time and space is a necessary preliminary to the perception of extended phenomena. It is only by subsequent analysis of the formed thought that we learn its constituent elements."\*

Again—

"Space is represented as an infinite extension ; force, knowledge, and will, as infinite intensions. But the infinity attributed to space is only a deduction from the infinity previously attributed to force. ....And of these two ideas—infinite space and infinite force—the former must be the derivative idea, *because it is the one which involves self-contradiction, and is strictly impossible and unintelligible. It is an infinite and eternal nonentity, a necessary unity made up of parts.*"†

Here Hegel's method comes in aid of Kant's. It appears then that the being of the soul, or its real existence, expressed under the notion of force, is itself both a form of intellectual intuition, and the active generator of the passive form of infinite space, which infinite space is strictly self-contradictory, impossible, and unintelligible. But the most extraordinary thing about this novel philosophy is, that the three powers of the soul, its being, subsistence, or substance, designated as force, its intelligence and its will, should be all made forms of the one faculty of mind, or intelligence, and that the three powers should be all described as "the formative forces of the mind." And although they are in the first process of their exposition called "forms of the faculties," they are finally assumed to be ideas which are "not conceptions but intuitions."‡ And it is said—"The idea of force not only generates and demonstrates the infinity of space, but it also underlies the idea of cause, and suggests the axioms of mathematics. Force then is an active principle, a condition of our perception, and a form or framework of thought."§ Then we are shewn how "*space and time exhaust all phenomena, while force, knowing power, and will exhaust all substance.*" And now let us see how force, that is, the being or substance of the soul, as a form of mind, or as one of the "formative forces of the mind," proceeds in its operation.

Having shewn how the external phenomena employ the forms of space and time, the writer continues :

\* Ibid.

+ Ibid.

‡ p. 40.

§ p. 40-1.



"And so we arrive at the sphere of force, the confines of the *me* and *mine*, of the inner and outer man of the mind. Here the soul ceases to be receptive and passive, and begins to be active; having passively received the impression of shapes moving in space and time, *she perceives them to be realities, by a kind of creative act which injects substance and force into the empty phantoms, and adds or attributes to the phenomena more than appears on their surface.* The appearance gives only extension and change of place or shape; *but these are not yet substance and life, we want deeper faculties than the mental forms of space and time to give us the intuition of living substances.* In sensation, we do not see substance, or reason, or will; but we are forced to attribute them to *the objects of sensation*, because *our own power, reason and will, are the canvases on which the picture is painted, the stuff out of which the image is formed.*"\*

The reader who would wish to see this philosophy in operation may turn to the article in the last number of the Home and Foreign Review, on the Scientific Aspects of the Exhibition of 1862, in which he will find the countless objects of that Exhibition treated under the two categories of phenomena and forces; or he may turn to the two articles in the Rambler on Reason and Faith, on which I animadverted in my last Letter, which animadversions, some readers, unacquainted with the sense of the author's philosophy, have fancied severe.

The author, however, hastens to say that—

"To obviate suspicion of scepticism, we must anticipate the course of our argument, and affirm the reality of objects before coming to the proof of the reasonableness of the conviction. There is no doubt of the existence of space and time, in the things which they embrace; but we would not say that space and time exist as the infinite quantities we are obliged to fancy them." And again he says—"Substances and living beings exist outside of us; but it is only in our internal subjective life that we mirror and perceive the phenomena of substance. 'We know other minds by our own, and after knowing them, we believe them to exist from the existence of our own;' (St. Aug. de Trin. viii. 6. see also ix. 3.) and as matter reveals itself to us conditioned, and regulated by *our ideal* space and time, so do mind and substance reveal themselves conditioned and regulated by the forces which constitute *our conscious soul.*"

And then the writer gives the name of "forces" to these three forms or powers, *viz.* being or force, intellect, and will, and says of them:—

“Like space and time, we may say that their tablets are hung up in the innermost recesses of the mind, to receive the impressions of substance, reason and life—of the world, man and God. They are the forms of our inner vital knowledge, as space and time are the frames of our outer phenomenal knowledge.”\*

And yet—“These powers, though not infinite in us, must be conceived as infinite in themselves. If force has its limits, where it dies out, still we must conceive that beyond these limits there is something possible. But nothing can be conceived possible except there is a power to perform it; so that the same act of thought which sets a limit to force, where it evaporates in weakness, proclaims that force reigns beyond that limit.”—So it is said, “*our* knowledge is limited, not knowledge in general.” And “So with will; beyond the assumed limits of volition there is an infinite possibility.” How then do we know what possibilities exterior to ourselves are realities? This question constitutes the greatest difficulty of the writer’s system. How are we to pass from our own inward powers to the objects that exist externally to us? As to the notion of existence the writer scarcely recognizes its importance. He says :—

“‘Existence’ is not a form of intuition, because of itself it is no intuition at all, except in the forms of force, reason and will. This is the real discovery of Descartes in his famous ‘*Cogito, ergo sum.*’ We may doubt of our ‘existence’ in general, because the word has no particular meaning; but we cannot doubt our internal action (force,) our thought (reason,) or our wish.”†

It is strange that this word *existence*, incessantly employed as it is in all cultivated as well as uncultivated languages, and in every possible form, should be considered as devoid of any particular meaning. When St. Augustine spoke of the being, intelligence and will of the soul, he certainly understood by “being” its existence. And the intelligence and will are commonly considered as the powers by which the soul exercises its force, as in fact its two active forces in opposition to its feeling or passive force.

In his third article, the writer gives us his solution of the great question—How is the mind to get at the reality of external truth? We are answered :—

“We have to show why, though so great a part of our knowledge is derived from within, it cannot be held that all our knowledge is so derived; and to prove that it is contrary to reason to be simple

egoists, or to think ourselves the only realities, and all else mere appearance."

"Reality is defined to be *ens actu*; not *existence* simply, but existence that *acts*, and is therefore *force*. The intuition of objective reality is therefore the intuition of external force.....By the word 'external' we do not here mean *distinctness in time and place*, but *distinctness from the unity of the individual self*: we have an intuition of the *self*; have we equally an intuition of the *not-self*? To answer that all thought *implies* a difference between the subject thinking and the object thought is insufficient; for it does not prove that the object thought is more than a differentiation of our own minds. We are not looking for an inference or implication, but for an intuition, not of mere existence, but of external force.

"Now our thesis is, that there are in the mind two original modes of intuition: first, the consciousness of the internal activity of our own powers; secondly, the consciousness of an external resistance to those powers. The first may be called the way of *creation*; the second, the way of *discovery*.\*

"Knowledge by way of creation, is only possible in its purity to an infinite being; knowledge by way of discovery is proper to a limited being. Discovery is the mind becoming conscious of the limits of its power." "Now does this consciousness of the limitation of our power always presuppose the intuition of the externality of the limiting force? Not always; for we may as readily suppose our force to die out of itself in weakness and impotence, as to end because it encounters a foreign force which bars further progress, and against which we vainly struggle. Both these limitations are familiar to us."†

Thus we are landed on the old, worn out, and often refuted theory that our knowledge of all beyond our conscious self results from the limitation and modification of that conscious self. But then the passive consciousness of that resistance is not itself the knowledge we desire, it arouses the mental powers into activity, and we are told that:—

"The way in which we discover the reality of external objects is in all points analogous to the way of discovering mathematical laws. It is not by the passive contemplation of ready made shapes that we come to know the laws of figures, but by the active generation of those figures *in our form* of space. So, also, *if we are only passive spectators of shapes in space and moving phenomena in time*, we have no reason to assert that these *phantasms* correspond to external realities. We demonstrate this correspondence in the same way as we demonstrate a mathematical problem, by the generative or active power of the three living forms of the intuition."‡

\* March, 1860, p. 324.

† p. 326.

‡ p. 329.



Thus objects external to the mind, however they may limit and modify the self-consciousness by their resistance, remain phenomena and phantasms, until the three active and subjective powers of the soul generate their reality. By the light of a philosophy like this do the Rambler and Review undertake to discuss religion and theology and the higher branches of moral science. Yet why should I use the word light, since the notion of intellectual light enters neither into their language nor their theory. For according to this system, not light but force is the medium of our knowledge, and a force springing from the inmost centre of the subjective soul as it consists of being, mind, and will combined in one. However he may distinguish, and however he may protest to the contrary, the writer, in this exposition of his philosophy, assigns to man a creative power, a force substantiating by virtue of the inherent powers of his soul, what without such substantiation, is but a world of appearances and phantasms. He equally ascribes to man a knowledge identical with such an exercise of creative force, as can belong to God alone. It is scarcely surprising that the author of a theory of mental intuition like this should have taken such a measure of man's intellect as is implied in the following sentence:—

“One of our greatest powers has its root in impotence and weakness; for generalization, if the memory was perfect and stable, would be scarcely possible.”\*

After an example, such as this descent from Catholic to rationalistic philosophy represents, of “*truths decayed from among the children of men*,”† we have the more reason to cry to God with the Psalmist—“*Send forth thy light and thy truth: they have conducted me, and brought me unto thy holy hill, and into thy tabernacles*.”‡ Nothing, indeed, short of an intelligent perusal of the whole of the three articles which constitute the essay on the “Forms of Intuition” can give an adequate notion of their unsoundness. Nor can the other productions on which I have animadverted, whether in this or my former Letter, be fairly comprehended without the key which this exposition of philosophical principles supplies. I should ill discharge my sad task of admonition, if I kept not in view the progressive disloyalty of this so-called Catholic periodical towards the Holy See. The sinister spirit

\* November, 1859, p. 27.

† Psalm xi, 2.

‡ Ps. xlii, 3.

in which the Editors detract the Popes, not merely in the temporal government of their states, but in even their spiritual government of the Church, is the crowning scandal of their publication. In the editorial notes on "Current Events" of the last Number occur remarks like the following.

"Let no man, therefore, wonder at, and let no Catholic deplore, the hopelessness of any immediate termination of the Italian question by the victory either of the royal or the pontifical cause."\*

"The Church could better bear to see him (the Pope) a captive or an exile than realising the ideals of 1846. Then indeed the remedy would be worse than the malady; for the temporal power has had no effect more injurious than that, during the last three hundred years, it has more and more italicised the Court of Rome. A local and exclusive Romanism, instead of an œcumenical Catholicism, was thus created, by which the very authority of the Holy See became a party cause; and in the dispute with Gallicanism the Ultramontane extreme developed a national character which was worse than that which it opposed, because it extended its foreign tone over all countries, checked the natural growth of material elements, and, by imposing an utterly external and not religious uniformity, obscured the real conditions of ecclesiastical unity. In the Middle Ages, before the Popes were so completely tied to Rome, or even safe there, for other reasons this local character did not appear. National distinctions were less marked, and the great schools of theology drew the clergy to other centres. The great Religious Orders did not radiate from Rome. There was less national jealousy and less ecclesiastical centralisation. Ultramontanism was a canonical, not a geographical idea. But just as the temporal power, by making the Pope an absolute sovereign, dissociated the Church from freedom, so by giving the *curia* a national character it has diminished the harmony and intelligent sympathy with the character and tendencies of other nations. They have been compelled to pursue their intellectual and political life without the help and encouragement of Rome; and the Holy See has had no part in many of the greatest achievements of Catholicism. Men who have most loved and revered the authority of the papacy, and have been most averse to a political or an episcopal Gallicanism, have found it clad in the guise of a people neither the most enlightened nor the most congenial; and even art and literature, theology and devotion, have been dwarfed to the proportions of a particular nation, until it has been hard to distinguish Ultramontane principles from Roman prejudices, and freedom from the one has almost seemed inseparable from jealousy of the other."†

It was no common hostility to Pontifical Authority that

\* Home and Foreign Review, January 1863, p. 313.

† pp. 314-5.

could have drawn out these sentences, or put them in this sequence. Let the reader weigh them one by one in the light of history, and each against the other. To pen their refutation would require a volume ; but this is not needed, for one broad fact will suffice to reverse the entire statement. The perverse ingenuity that found the cause of England's fall from the faith in the conduct of certain Popes, has been able to construct a more sweeping generalization of Pontifical misconduct. It has traced to the action of the Papacy for three hundred years past the disjoining and uncatholicising of the Universal Church. Now what is the fact ? A great revolt rose up out of the pride of human hearts. Catholic Sovereigns and States caught the infection, Erastianism became the order of the day. The powers of the world mingled themselves in everything ecclesiastical. And in proportion as the authority of Rome was checked and resisted, faith grew less, traditions slumbered, and piety cooled. The common law of the Church was superseded by civil interferences, ritual purity and pious observances were in various ways sacrificed to the local spirit of the time, and the old remedy of Papal legates and Pontifical appointments was no longer endured. Sovereigns became uncatholic in all but name, states and their laws unchristian, and nations revolutionary. And beneath the action of a thousand secular influences, local churches and institutions relaxed their discipline and waned from the vigour of their traditions. Then, like a beacon on a lofty eminence, did Rome shine forth more brightly over the world. Other churches grew bedimmed from obscuring influences : whilst Rome continued in the same Apostolic constancy, the same high principles, the same wealth of traditions, and the same devout observances. Then did the Religious Orders fix their centres in the Roman light, and the Schools of Rome rose in importance, in proportion as those elsewhere sank or ceased. And if so many churches are now arising once more with renovated vigour, it is because they are able to remodel their discipline and revive their life from the example and precept of that Head and Mother of all churches,—of that See to which all the Church comes as to the living fountain of her principles. But it is the temporal power which has enabled the Popes to keep the Roman Church, her tradition, and her practice, pure from the degenerating influences of the world and of secular courts, until the need was again felt, and the opportunities given, for the diffusion of her light throughout the regions of Christendom.

Yet the Review, which professes to be in the secrets of



Divine Providence, as Rome never pretended to be, conceives that that Providence will be frustrated in its plans, unless the Pope be driven out of Italy to acquire a wisdom which its conductors not only claim to possess, but proceed to impart to their readers in the following terms:—

“On the same grounds it would be disastrous now if his (the Pope’s) adversaries gave way. If the party who have always opposed the desire of making Rome the capital were to triumph, or if the government purchased peace by the restoration of the Marches, then the Italian revolution would be an unmixed calamity for religion. Trials are not inflicted in vain. Providence would be baffled if the result of so great an uprising were a restoration instead of an improvement of the old condition, and if there were neither compensation nor atonement for the guilt and suffering of the last three years. That atonement and that compensation are to be looked for in things with which the liberals among the Italian clergy can hardly sympathise,—the eradication of the peculiar Italian traditions, the destruction of national exclusiveness, the alliance of religion with a system of freedom as remote from that of Turin as from that of Rome, familiarity with the highest development of religious and profane knowledge, and contact with Protestantism in its intellectual, religious, and tolerant form, instead of with a passionate, fanatical, and ignorant unbelief. This solution will be lost if either Church or State should yield.”\*

One more passage and I have done.—

“Where a question of principle is involved, it must be settled before the voice of expediency can be heard. Recent evidence has proved that the Roman Government was arbitrary in its nature; and before this fact, the discussion of its beneficence or of its unpopularity is superfluous. The impulse which leads men to resist oppression is founded on a right; but the inducement to resist arbitrary government, even if not oppressive, is a duty. In one case men vindicate their own rights and interests; in the other they vindicate, even at the risk of injuring themselves, the rights of God.”†

I put these passages before a shrewd, scholarly and practical judge of men and books, and asked him what he thought of them, and his words reecho my own opinion—“Before a man could have written sentiments so blind as these, an anti-Catholic spirit must have gone deeply into his mind.”

What I above all things remark in the methods I have examined, is their tendency to pull down faith, diminish truth, and dissolve authority. Whilst professing to promote the Catholic religion, the processes put in exercise are of a

\* pp. 315-6.

† p. 318.

negative, critical, or sceptical tendency. No doctrine of the Church is positively asserted, illustrated, or defended. No objection of the unbeliever is fairly taken hold of and met with strenuous refutation. The writers have more the bearing of the enemy's van-guard, than the heart and spirit of the Saints who keep the walls of God's holy City. Their faces seem set against the defences of the Church, and they have introduced the adversary's devices where he himself had no entrance open to him. Whilst so great a familiarity with unchristian philosophies and infidel critics is displayed, and so constant a preference exhibited for the methods of those blinded men; there is an apparent unconsciousness of the fact that that method is always the parent or child, the originator or the result, of the doctrine which it exhibits. It is as impossible to separate certain methods from certain doctrines as it is to separate the form from the substance in which it is inherent. Great truths may be treated after various methods, for they are approachable from many sides; but there is a negative criticism in which the method and the doctrine are equivalent with each other; since all that they imply is an abstraction of the mind from some of the positive laws of evidence.

An unreflecting wit gave expression to the amusement it afforded him to watch the clever boldness with which some of those writers ran close to the boundaries of error without being fairly caught on the wrong side; and the remark became current as such levities do. The semblance of truth which the repetition of this witticism implied is anything but exalting to those of whom it was uttered; but even the semblance of truth would have fled and left the remark vapid, had those who were amused but comprehended the methods of those writers. They would have found that those methods, besides educating errors, were in themselves the gravest errors. Nay, were those methods carried out constantly, by all, and to the full, religious truth could not exist upon the earth. It is impossible to exalt on principle the claims of human theories to push aside religious truth, and the right of negative criticism, based on modern experience of nature, to over-ride universal traditions sprung from a divine source, without sacrificing supernatural truth to the barren speculations of human pride. And whether such ungenerous work be done through principles advocated by writers as their own, or are but adopted, countenanced, and circulated from other writers, the result is equal, and the responsibility is equal. You may wound and slay with another man's sword as much as with

your own ; but the moral law, will let you off on that distinction less even than the civil law. The habit of anonymous periodical writing is beset by certain temptations which are more easily understood than analysed. And where the spirit of a Magazine is characterised by strong divergences from the standard of thought and sentiment proper to its readers, it can only be kept up by novelty of manner and smartness of style. Where literature alone is concerned, this may be both successful and innocent ; but a style made up of new methods can never be safe where the truths of religion are at stake. Moreover the contributor has his personality merged behind the mask of the Magazine, and there he is apt to rival his invisible collaborators in cultivating the specialities of their joint work, and thus each carries the other on in the track of divergence, and a writer is led to think and to enunciate what in his individual capacity, or on his personal responsibility, he never would have dreamed.

Deeply is it to be regretted that writers, so accomplished and so capable, instead of being to their brethren a source of instruction, and to the Church a defence and an ornament, should rather have turned the gifts with which God has blessed them into a cause of apprehension and anxiety. On us English Catholics they have brought a reproach which was hitherto confined to the Anglican Establishment,—the reproach of having rationalising writers within the very precincts of the fold. When divers classes of Protestants mark this rationalising tendency, as appearing amongst us, it is time for Catholics to reflect with some degree of seriousness. The *Saturday Review*, a publication representing the broadest as well as the most critical section of Protestantism, finds a similarity of spirit between the *Home and Foreign Review* and the notorious *Essays and Reviews*, and speculates on its final influence over the Catholics of this country. The *Union*, a periodical which reflects the high Anglican principles, looks upon the same *Review* as semi-infidel. Whilst in the paper called *Public Opinion*, which may be considered as representing indifferentism, letters have appeared, not without direct allusion to Bishop Colenso, in which the writers in the *Review* are contrasted with Cardinal Wiseman and Dr. Faber, as if the two classes of writers reflected distinct parties in the Church, analogous to the rationalising and sentimentalising parties in Protestantism. An Anglican clergyman who was conducted over one of our large Catholic Institutions, read the Diocesan's warning against the *Review* fixed on the wall, and he expressed his satisfaction at being disabused of the impres-



sion he had held in common with others, that the Catholic authorities had allowed those writings to pass without contradiction.\* With reference to those outside the Church, we are in this position. In addition to those who sigh for unity, authority, and plenitude of truth, there are numbers who are revolted with the rationalism that has sprung up among Anglican teachers, and with the utter incapacity of Anglican authority to deal with it. Wearied with negativism, uncertainty, and divisions, there is a constant increase of numbers who look towards the Church as the only possible haven of peace for their storm-tossed souls. When, lo! it reaches them, that an element of rationalism has appeared amongst the Catholics. Who is there to tell those souls that this is no emanation from the sanctuary? Who is there to let them know that it is disclaimed, reproved, even condemned by Catholic authority? Who is there to inform them that it is but the unrecognized work of three or four laymen? They will wait, they will watch, they will see how the Church deals with this apparition: how the clergy treat it; how the laity view it. They will know, before they look again our way, whether we repel the evil from us, or suffer it to proceed on its course without authoritative interference. Alas! these are not all who watch this portent. There are others who will be too ready to accept it, and use it, as proof against the Church of her unchristian character.

If the way in which those writers are viewed outside the Church is ominous of their position, far more seriously ought they to reflect on the view which is taken of them within the Church. Let them consider whom it is they aggrieve, and who they are that applaud them. Let them carefully inform their consciences on which side stands authority, religious learning, venerable influence, weight of character, piety, obedience, even numbers. Let them weigh and estimate if the Church is with them or against them. Let them consider whence those painful censures have emanated, how long they were delayed, how reluctantly they were used. Let them ask themselves if their peculiar methods and opinions have not all been drawn from the adversaries of Catholic truth. Let them ask history, if any of those who have persistently withstood the voice of ecclesiastical authority have ever prospered beneath the censures which they continued to resist? Let them ask of the private spirit itself; if it has not ever been a

\* In the last number of *Notes and Queries* (Jan. 24th) I perceive a notice of the Home and Foreign Review, expressed in these words—"This Review is, we believe, the recognised organ of the Roman Catholic Church in this country."

broken reed wounding the mightiest intellects that leaned upon it? Oh, let them reflect in time. And let those reflect, who thoughtlessly encourage what they do not understand.

You, my Reverend Brethren, will lament with me, that those in whom we had hoped to find the champions of the Church, have become a hindrance to her work, and a cause of danger to certain souls. With great abilities, the open field of an acknowledged want before them, and a disposition on the part of their brethren to welcome with gratitude their labours in the noblest cause—the canker worm of rationalism has crept in, and our goodly expectations have sunk down into regrets.

The evil may be summed in a short sentence, though long years may not see its termination. The seeds of doubt, steeped in a spirit of irreverence, are being sown in Catholic minds. Youths, whose fathers suffered all things for the faith, and thought their sufferings little could they but transmit the priceless treasure to their descendants, are invited and stimulated to question the wisdom of the Church's conduct, as well as her traditions. At the very time that God was blessing the work of the saints, of whom we are unworthy, with a fruitfulness beyond all expectation, this calamity has arisen to try what spirits are of God. Meagre and unsubstantial as that rationalising spirit is, despite its brave pretensions, it is seductive to those who worship the mere human intellect, that god of this age, prompt to follow whithersoever it may lead; and equally to those who are light and vain enough to seek the credit of being its worshippers, however small their own pretensions to the image and likeness of their idol. That the perversion of one of God's greatest gifts, the gift of sound intelligence, may be stayed in its downward course, should be the prayer of all devout souls. If it be permitted to go on in disastrous development, I shall not live to see all the fruits that may grow from the seeds which are being planted; but in giving warning of their appearance to those towards whom I have responsibilities—*Liberavi animam meam.*

Praying Almighty God to bless you,

I remain, my Rev. Brethren,

Your faithful Servant in Christ,

✠ W. B. ULLATHORNE.

Birmingham, 26th January, 1863.

















